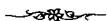


THE PROBLEM  
OF  
LUTHERAN UNION  
AND  
OTHER ESSAYS



By  
THEODORE GRAEBNER



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## PREFACE.

A word as to the origin of these chapters. The title-essay was written in the summer of 1934 and completed early in 1935. Requests from many parts of our Synod caused the Faculty of Concordia Seminary two years ago to commission the present writer with the task of stating with all necessary fulness the present attitude of the principal Lutheran bodies in matters of faith and practise. All the documents quoted were before the writer as the chapter was being written. The quotations have been rechecked and may be accepted as accurately rendering both the text in each given instance and its context. The second essay is in a manner the converse of the first. Again it is based on the writer's direct acquaintance with all documents quoted. The essay on the liturgical situation as it now exists in our midst was written two years ago. The chapter on the English Bible was called for in 1925 by the quadricentennial of William Tyndale's version. A few references to translations which appeared after 1925 were added when the essay was given its present form. The concluding chapter, on the sophistries of Modernism, was written in 1930. None of these essays have appeared in print before. Much of the material has been used in lectures at Concordia Seminary and will be recognized by former members of the author's classes in Symbolics and Propaedeutics.

THE AUTHOR.

## AN INTRODUCTION.

A determined effort is being made at the present time to unite the Lutheran church-bodies of this country into *one united Lutheran Church*. Whether this effort will result in an organic union of federated or amalgamated synods or in mere mutual recognition and cooperation is not essential.

Will our Missouri Synod take kindly to this movement? Almost eighty years ago, in the year 1856, our own Dr. C. F. W. Walther proposed that free conferences be held "with a view towards the final realization of *one united Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America*." Moreover, from 1856 to 1859 representatives of the Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania synods and our own Missouri Synod met for this very purpose, fifty-four clerical and nineteen lay representatives having been present at the first conference. No permanent organization was effected at that time, but the efforts of later conferences crystallized in the organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference, the synods of Ohio, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, and the Norwegian Synod forming the federation. The Illinois Synod was consolidated with the Illinois District of the Missouri Synod in 1879; the Ohio Synod withdrew in 1881 on account of the controversy on election and conversion, and the Norwegian Synod withdrew in 1883, but maintained fraternal relations with the Synodical Conference until 1912. To-day the Missouri Synod, the Wisconsin Synod, the Slovak Synod, and the Norwegian Synod (a Norwegian body formed by those who disagreed with the Madison Theses of union) constitute the federated synods of the Synodical Conference. In paragraph 3, "Purpose and Object," of its constitution we read to this day that one of the purposes of the Synodical Conference is "*the uniting of all Lutheran synods of America into one orthodox American Lutheran Church*." As recently as 1917 our Synod, at the request of pastors of the Minnesota, Iowa, Ohio, and Missouri synods, who had held a number of informal conferences, elected a committee which, among other things, should "be prepared to treat with similar committees representing other

Lutheran synods." This effort resulted in many meetings, extending over many years, until finally in 1929 our committee presented to our Synod doctrinal theses upon which all parties concerned (representatives of the Missouri, Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo synods) had agreed. Sorry to say, the efforts put forth did not result in uniting the synods which were represented in the discussions at the committee meetings.

A new direct proposal of uniting the disunited Lutheran church-bodies of this country is now being made. Both the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church during the past year adopted resolutions to this effect at their conventions held at Waverly, Iowa, and Savannah, Georgia, respectively. Space forbids our reprinting the resolutions in their entirety. A careful analysis of these resolutions reveals two very significant facts: the estimate which each of these two large church-bodies has regarding the present Lutheran situation in this country and the way in which we may expect each to approach the proposal of uniting the Lutheran church-bodies of America. The United Lutheran Church has gone on record as saying "that the Lutheran church-bodies in America have held unwaveringly to the faith of the Church set forth in its historic confessions" and that therefore "there is no doctrinal reason why such a union should not come to pass." We may accordingly expect that the United Lutheran Church is from the very outset not interested in a discussion of doctrine or doctrinal differences, *but merely in mutual recognition and cooperation.* The American Lutheran Church, in its resolutions, does not take doctrinal agreement among the Lutherans of this country for granted, but will "support every movement that endeavors *to bring about Lutheran unity on the basis of the Scriptures and the Confessions*" (italics our own). The American Lutheran Church is aware of the fact that there is no true unity now, but that doctrinal differences exist, and *is willing to support an endeavor to remove these differences in accordance with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.*

The very different attitude of these two large church-bodies is readily understood by any one who knows their history. The United Lutheran Church, as far back as the organization of the General Synod in 1820, has never been a staunch defender of

true Lutheranism. Even the General Council, which at one time had such good defenders of the faith as Krauth, Spaeth, and Schaeffer and was organized in 1867 as a protest against the emasculated Lutheranism of the General Synod, — the Philadelphia Seminary (Mount Airy) having been previously founded in opposition to the liberal Seminary at Gettysburg, — was not only not always consistently Lutheran, but became doctrinally so indifferent that it did not hesitate to merge again with the General Synod in 1918, which, in the mean time, had not very much improved its Lutheranism. It is therefore not at all surprising to hear that the United Lutheran Church is, *according to its own admission*, not at all minded to make *doctrine* an issue in an attempt at Lutheran union; the United Lutheran Church is not interested in unity, but only in union. In fact, just recently, in one of its official publications, the *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, issue of January, 1935, it resented the very idea of doctrinal purity (as it has been doing for years by worshipping together with sectarians), and by denying the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures it removes on its part the very foundation for it. — The constituent synods of the American Lutheran Church have fought hard controversial battles and are much more doctrine-minded than those who make up the united Lutheran Church, although the formation of the American Lutheran Conference has not been a step in the direction of preserving doctrinal purity.

Of course, it is understood that the true doctrine should be not only taught, but also applied and that a Christian must give evidence of his faith by his good works. We must therefore demand that not only in doctrine, but also in *practise* a Lutheran church-body conform to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. In making this demand, we are well aware of our own shortcomings in this respect; what we insist upon is that an un-Lutheran practise must not be advocated or tolerated, as this is actually being done in some sections of the Lutheran Church of this country.

Having been requested by Dr. Th. Graebner to write an introduction to this book, THE PROBLEM OF LUTHERAN UNION AND OTHER ESSAYS, I thought it well to give this *brief analysis* of the present situation in reference to the Lutheran union movement.

Dr. Graebner very ably presents the situation itself. True unity does not now exist among the Lutheran church-bodies in this country; there is abundant documentary evidence, also of a very recent date, that *in doctrine and practise* the Lutheran Church of this country is to-day not united, but very much disunited. *The facts in the case ought to be known; and these facts Dr. Graebner presents.* Any one who is truly interested in Lutheran unity will be glad to make a prayerful and careful study of the situation as it presents itself to us. We heartily agree with the American Lutheran Church, as expressed in its resolution adopted at Waverly, Iowa, October, 1934, that our sincere and earnest endeavor must be "*to bring about Lutheran unity on the basis of the Scriptures and the Confessions,*" the Confessions being a true exhibition of the doctrines of Holy Writ and not merely a historical statement of the faith of the Lutherans of those days.

Over against the atheism and the materialism, the doctrinal indifferentism and the Modernism, of our day the Lord has placed an increased responsibility upon the Lutheran Church, which He has so richly endowed and blessed, to proclaim the Word of God, especially the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in all its truth and purity for the salvation of souls to the glory of God. A united Lutheran Church could better measure up to this responsibility than the disunited Lutheran Church we have to-day; but it must be a Church not merely *outwardly*, but *inwardly* united; a Church that has and proclaims and defends that common faith which believes and teaches naught else than that truth which God has revealed to us by inspiring the holy writers of the Old and the New Testament Scriptures; a Church that is true to its divine commission, of which Paul speaks to Timothy, saying: "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: *Preach the Word*; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine*; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry," 2 Tim. 4, 1—5.

What I have written, as also what Dr. Graebner has written, is in no way to discourage the present endeavor in behalf of a united Lutheran Church, but is rather a contribution towards *true Lutheran unity*. May God direct and bless the efforts of all who are laboring to bring this about!

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The other essays which are printed in this book, "As Others See Us," "Our Liturgical Chaos," "The English Bible up to Date," and "The Mendacity of Modernism," I know, will be appreciated by the reader; they present matters that need to be given emphasis at the present time.

Incidentally I shall add that writing religious essays and, though they be along different lines, printing them in book form is a venture that deserves encouragement.

St. Louis, March, 1935.

JOHN H. C. FRITZ.

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ERRATUM: p. 18, l. 6, read *Norwegian Lutheran Church*.

## THE PROBLEM OF LUTHERAN UNION.

In writing this analysis of Lutheran Church conditions in America, the author had a threefold purpose in mind. No general survey of the subject has been published from the Missouri Synod standpoint these many years, none since the new alinements of 1917, 1918, and 1930. Secondly, there is a very noisy and undoubtedly sincere demand among some people in all synods that the Lutheran synods be amalgamated into one body "since they are all one in doctrine anyway." And in the third place, requests have been voiced repeatedly in recent years that a statement giving up-to-date information as to the attitude of the various Lutheran bodies in matters of doctrine and practise be given to the pastors and the intelligent laity of our Church. The Ontario District has, by a resolution suggested by its Young People's Committee, expressed itself to the effect that there is an urgent need of making "a compilation of the various points that separate us and committing them to writing for the guidance of our young people and every one in general." The committee that was instructed to provide this compilation requested the present writer to carry out this resolution. The Faculty of Concordia Seminary was requested in 1932 by the Pastoral Conference of Chicago and Vicinity to publish up-to-date information mainly regarding the United Lutheran Church, and the Faculty referred the matter to the present writer. Very many individual requests have also been received for material from the files of the present writer bearing on the status of the various Lutheran synods. In addition, the interest which the subject must hold for all who are interested in the welfare of the Lutheran Church and her present condition as an external organization might

be regarded as sufficient justification for the effort and time expended upon this analysis of the greater Lutheran church-bodies in the United States and Canada.

That the various sections of the paragraphs which follow have been written in a "purely objective" spirit is not claimed by the writer. He loves his Lutheran Church and has devoted his life to one purpose — that of preserving the Lutheran heritage of doctrine and to restore it to rightful heirs unwilling to claim it. His labors have had the sole purpose of making the Gospel as preached in our Church so glorious and winsome that all who call themselves by the Lutheran name might in all sincerity subscribe to the historic teachings of their Church and the principles of soundly Lutheran church-life. When he sees Modernism invade the theological journals of Lutheran synods; when he observes American dispensationalism (millennialism) getting a grip on large areas and occupying professorial chairs in Lutheran seminaries; when he finds doubts cast upon the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible; when, in a word, he is made aware of efforts to give false teaching domicile in the Lutheran Church, — he cannot refrain from giving expression to alarm, exasperation, possibly indignation, such as will affect at times also his language with a certain asperity that is far from being the writer's natural mood or disposition. On the other hand, he is not (consciously) led into false statements, overstatements, or understatements by such irritation. He knows that it can serve no good purpose in controversy to misrepresent an opponent's position or by false emphasis to endeavor to make his case look worse than it is. If anything, this writer is tempted in the opposite direction, namely, to make allowances and to give the benefit of the doubt wherever possible, even when the facts no longer justify such mildness of judgment. He has, besides, in himself the Old Adam,



and that gentleman is an extreme unionist. Also, it has been the writer's good fortune to be on terms of intimate acquaintance during the past twenty-five years with many of the leaders in the larger Lutheran synods. With some of these, and with many of the clergy and also laity, such acquaintance has ripened into sincere friendship. Sometimes through discussion of controverted points, sometimes through identity of scholarly interest, correspondence has originated which helped him comprehend the difficulties besetting those in other Lutheran organizations who share our own viewpoint. Hence the writer does not fear that the paragraphs which follow will be misunderstood as to their tendency. Nothing is farther from his mind than to overemphasize the differences or to impute motives to the opponent or to claim any particular merits for his own body, the Synodical Conference, as a representative of sound Lutheranism. After all, such merits would have to be personal; and since there is no inducement whatever for any member of this body to take a liberalist or modernistic position, — with the certain result in prospect of deposition from office, — there can be no claim of *personal* merit in standing by the old doctrines. Only this we acknowledge with gratitude towards God, that He has so maintained the doctrinal temper of both pastors and people in the Synodical Conference that they will brook no deviation from the teachings of Scripture. Viewed under the aspect of the present age, this unity of the Synodical Conference is a marvelous thing indeed and would appear to friendly outside observers even more marvelous if they knew the amount of ingratitude, sluggishness, and wide-spread lack of interest in Christian education and missions which the good Lord has mercifully to overlook in order to maintain these blessings upon our organization. Those who know their Synod best will most

willingly acknowledge that God has been very *merciful* to the Missouri Synod and its affiliated bodies.

In the following sections we shall deal with the obstacles to the consummation of Lutheran understanding, the hurdles which interfere with easy progress on the way to the coveted goal—Lutheran union. But before we take up the discussion of the various bodies, a word is to be said regarding the demand for a unified Lutheran Church as it has been voiced officially during the past year or two.

### I. THE DEMAND FOR UNION.

"It is impossible for me to detect any real doctrinal differences in the three great organizations of our Church—the Synodical Conference, the United Lutheran Church, and the American Lutheran Conference." The words are quoted from an article by Dr. L. G. Abrahamson, (editor of *Augustana*, a weekly journal in Swedish, for the Augustana Synod) in the *Augustana Quarterly* of July, 1932. Coming from this able nestor of Lutheran editors, they bear some weight. Dr. Abrahamson is not able to see any real doctrinal difference between American Lutheran bodies. The same conviction is voiced in essays that come to our notice in other official Lutheran organs, as when Rev. Thomas M. Wiesen (A. L. C.) addresses a gathering of Lutheran preachers and says: "Step into any of our Lutheran churches, and, as a rule, you will find that the evangelical note of the Gospel is sounded and by a rightful dividing of the Word of Truth the man of God is made perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. You can always tell a Lutheran sermon. There is that devotion to the Word and a faithful interpretation of doctrine that strikes a responsive chord in the heart of a true Lutheran, no matter from what synod or conference he may hail." He continues: "It is not to be wondered,

then, that the Lutheran layman asks, 'Why so many synods? Why can't we have one United American Lutheran Church?' The reason for these questions is that the Lutheran layman has not been convinced that there is a difference. . . . I have never met a Lutheran layman yet who knows why, or is convinced that, the Lutheran Church should not be one." (*The Lutheran*, January 18, 1934.) President Knubel of the U. L. C. knows of certain differences, but does not regard them so divisive. "In the American Lutheran family there have been dissensions. Offenses have arisen at times, and as a result we hear certain terms used which are reminders of these dissensions and offenses. Calvinism, predestination, lodgism, unionism, exclusivism, Liberalism, such are some of the words which the initiated understand and of which even the laity has partial knowledge. The danger is that these terms and the things for which they stand become more or less definitely exaggerated until they appear as definite tests of Lutheranism. They are nothing of the kind." (*The Lutheran*, June 8, 1933.)

Demands for organic union have been voiced lately by a number of lay groups. Especially when the brotherhoods get together, speeches are made in an expansive mood, and the demand for uniting all Lutheran synods into one organization is put into resolutions enthusiastically adopted. These good people are ignorant of conditions in their own synod and do not dream of the disunion which exists between the larger Lutheran groups. They can see in union certain material gains, such as "efficiency and economy of administration in Home and Foreign Mission work, in management of institutions, such as old people's homes, hospitals, educational institutions, and publications," and therefore "do earnestly and prayerfully recommend an honest effort for a union of all groups by a confederation of synods, with the ultimate object of

organic union." And again: "We petition the presidents of the various synodical groups named [six in number] to call a meeting in the latter part of 1934 for the purpose of uniting all Lutheran churches under one Lutheran Church of America." (Lutheran Men's Alliance of Southern California, April, 1934.) At the meeting of the Lutheran Brotherhoods in Chicago in 1933 it was stated that these men are working for closer fellowship and cooperation and finally, when the time is ripe for it, for a united Lutheran Church in America. A correspondent writing in the *Lutheran Herald* (November, 1933) said: "Do they also have the Synodical Conference in mind? They have. 'Our brethren from Missouri' are often referred to with respect and sometimes with a touch of humor. Now, all this explains why the Federation frowns upon anything which in the least might cause dissension. If matters of a controversial nature are given expression by some imprudent delegate, the matters are either referred to the Governing Board for a decent burial or summarily dismissed. What is the common meeting-ground? Luther. Why not Christ? For the reason that Christian life has found somewhat different expressions in days past among Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, and Germans. No, then it is safer to go back to Dr. Martin Luther and stop there."<sup>1)</sup>

At Harrisburg, Pa., the Executive Committee of the Lutheran Laymen's Movement for Stewardship of the United

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1) The *Northwestern Lutheran* fitly calls it a "really shocking thing" "that the common meeting-ground for all Lutherans is to be Luther and not Christ. . . . The whole thing seems but the expression of a shifting way, shifting from a clear confession of faith and creed we mean. Does this explain why 'our Missouri brethren' are referred to 'with a touch of humor'? The Synodical Conference stands four-square upon a confession, most clearly expressed, of Christ. His person and office, in the first place, and of Luther as the believer in Christ, in the second place. In other words, we are Christians first and Lutherans only because the Lutheran Confession is truly Christian."

Lutheran Church in America, May 17, 1934, memorialized its Church "to bring about unity among our seventeen groups to the end that the mother Church of the Reformation in America may present a united front in warring 1) against the prevalent false teachings, 2) against the false codes of morality, and 3) against all unchristian spirit in industry and business."

The Lutheran Men's Association of Chicagoland resolved May 31, 1934: "Whereas the different Lutheran bodies in America are in all essentials one in doctrine, therefore be it resolved that we express our deep gratitude to God for the measure of organic union of general Lutheran bodies that has already been consummated and for the continually growing conviction among Lutherans that His purposes can best be served by merging all Lutherans and all Lutheran resources into one great organization." A copy of these resolutions was sent to the president of every General Lutheran body in America with the request that he present them to his particular organization.

At Toledo a Lutheran Men's League adopted a resolution instructing its president to appoint a committee whose duty it should be to submit a resolution at the conventions of each body favoring the immediate merger of the United and the American Lutheran churches. At the banquet where this vote was taken the speakers were Dr. Frederick H. Knubel, president of the United Lutheran Church, and Dr. Otto Mees, president of the American Lutheran Conference. Both speakers seemed to favor such a merger.

Dr. E. Clarence Miller, treasurer of the United Lutheran Church, writing in the *Augustana Quarterly*, 1933, declares against any union that would "constitute a denial of truth which we have been taught to believe represents the faith of the Lutheran Church." However, he believes



that laymen can perceive no real difference. "Only those of deep theological training and fearful imaginations can see any differences. . . . It is the stressing of religious fads and theories of practise and organization rather than the fundamental faith which sets up causes of controversy and discord." He demands "a union in organization." The U. L. C. Synod of Ohio early in 1934, by formal resolution, called for a merger of the A. L. C. and the U. L. C. because the present "unnecessary division of forces in the face of a common enemy dissipates the power and influence of our Lutheran forces." (Comment in the *Lutheran* on this resolution: "Probably it will be referred to a committee with favorable, but carefully guarded recommendations for negotiations with other general groups.") And the Canada Synod adopted an enthusiastic resolution in June, 1934, "to memorialize the U. L. C. A. to do all in its power to hasten the day of organic union of all Lutheran forces in America."<sup>2)</sup>

The *Lutheran*, official organ of the U. L. C., does not advocate organic union of all Lutherans, yet its influence is steadily directed towards larger fellowship of Lutheran synods. (Since it permits so great a diversity of opinions in its own midst, there is nothing surprising about this.) It deplores our divisions because they "deprive us of stature in the eyes of journals in comparison with smaller numbers. In the sphere of public opinion on ethical questions our views are rarely heeded." In illustration, it refers to the ten synods with eighteen congregations, represented among the 11,319 church-members of the Lutheran Church in Racine, Wis. It points to the "enormous waste of educational and missionary energy, often coupled with pitiful

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2) On these suggestions the U. L. C., in 1934, resolved to instruct its president to appoint a committee that is to meet similar committees of other Lutheran bodies.

exhibitions of rivalry and jealousy. Whither the continued accentuation of nationalistic and other peculiarities is leading our Church it is hard to foretell. When the present seventeen Lutheran bodies, or synods, shall have become more fully Americanized, will there be seventeen separate English representatives in this country of the great Reformation faith, with as many kinds of seminaries and colleges? It looks very much that way at present. Surely this is not an ideal prospect. But then, this is not an ideal world." (October 21, 1926.) Occasionally there is an article advocating organic union. "The organized union of all American Lutherans is demanded by the very genius of our Lutheran Church. . . . The organic union of all Lutherans in America is desirable from many points of view. If they are all one in faith and confession, they ought to unite as one general body, with such synodical subdivisions as may be expedient. . . . It is the third or fourth largest Protestant denomination and yet is far below much smaller denominations in its national influence. . . . But one national Lutheran American Church would soon gain the recognition we deserve. . . . The organic union of all Lutherans in America is possible. No confessional differences stand in the way." (July 27, 1933.)

Some time during the summer of 1934 we wrote in the *Lutheran Witness* a few lines acknowledging our duty to be "unremitting in our efforts to achieve unity of thought and conviction among American Lutherans and thereby advance the cause of unity"; but we continued: —

"We intend, however, to keep our feet on the ground and not to step off into space as we follow the *mirage* of an American Lutheran Church all under one president, directing the affairs of a union of all existing American synods — and may God have mercy upon him! We are not interested in a superorganization uniting under one head the Yankees and the Canadians, the Pennsylvania Dutch and the Chicago Pomeranians, the *Russ-*

*laender*, the old Missouri stock, the Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, Icelanders, and Finns,—all the old alliances and loyalties canceled and a union formed as of furniture factories or tobacco plantations, where nothing counts but the reducing of overhead and the increasing of dividends. The thing cannot be done, and those who think it can should have some one reach up with a boat-hook and pull their feet back on the ground.”

To this the editor of the *Lutheran* responded as follows: “We agree most sincerely with Dr. Graebner that in the consideration of unity amongst us for whom the Book of Concord is the confessional basis, we should all ‘keep our feet on the ground and not step off into space as we follow a *mirage*.’ We, like him, have no time to waste on linking together ‘Yankees and Canadians, Pennsylvania Dutch and Pomeranians,’ etc. We are convinced that the Lutherans in the United States and the Lutherans in Canada should have each an organized entity”; and he added to this the assurance that as far as the U. L. C. is concerned, “this group does not desire to absorb other Lutheran bodies.” The proper means in the opinion of the editor — and to this we heartily agree — is that the several synods authorize participation in a conference that should seek to remove the obstacle that now stands in the way of establishing brotherly relations.

Also the *Lutheran Herald* of the Norwegian Lutheran Church warns against attempting further amalgamations and points out: “One thing we may be sure of, and for which we have the command of God, is that there ought to be unity in faith.” In its issue of April 17, 1934, it took note of the fact that “all these three large bodies (the United Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Conference, and the Synodical Conference) subscribe to the Book of Concord. There is furthermore a remarkable agreement in confessions recently written dealing with differences in the Lutheran Church in America. . . . We have

no objection to the doctrinal position expressed by the Synodical Conference in its *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod.*" Then it suggests that there should be meetings of representatives of the different groups as soon as possible.<sup>3)</sup> As for any organic union with other church-bodies, the same paper, July 17, 1934, disavowed any such intention as far as Norwegian Lutherans are concerned.

The American Lutheran Church organs stress the need of unity in the faith before there can be any fraternal recognition. Its spokesmen do not consider it sufficient that synods subscribe to the Book of Concord. "Our experience with the treatment of their confessions to-day by the older denominations and with the treatment of the Apostles' Creed by the Modernists in the various denominational groups which claim to accept it, makes us a little unwilling to accept official subscription to a creed by any one, even in our Lutheran Church." As between a rigid and a harsh conservatism of some and the flighty unionism of others, the writer prefers ultraconservatism. "Even those who lean too far back are still facing the heavens where there is light; but those who lean too far forward only face the darkness of the earth." As for the practical appeal of organic union. "We dare not become too much impressed with the argument that it is necessary to unite in order to speak with a commanding voice to the world and to bear a powerful testimony to Christ before men. The voice

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3) Comment of Dr. Arndt in *Concordia Theological Monthly*: "That people who stand on the Lutheran Confessions, but differ with one another on points of doctrine, should meet to discuss their differences and to seek to compose them on the basis of the Holy Scriptures has always been the position of the Missouri Synod, as many a chapter in its history will bear out. But it will be admitted by all, we trust, that unity of the spirit rather than external union must be the object of all negotiations of the kind under discussion."

that will be listened to is not the voice of numbers, size, organizations, or government; it is the voice of the life of the Church in its congregations and its members. The true inner unity of the Church will produce a voice that is heard in heaven and on earth. 'Leading rôle,' 'united voice,' 'our rightful place,' 'the spirit of the times,' 'everything else is merging,' and such as these are slogans and propaganda we must banish as utterly unworthy and dangerous. They only retard true Lutheran unity, although it is possible they may bring about a sort of Lutheran union." "The broad insinuations of 'hair-splitting' against the theologians of the Church must stop. A union in which the laity has been taught to despise or minimize the fundamental necessity of theology or its teachers will have a weak foundation to stand upon and will not be prepared to build a strong Church or to give a true witness for Christ." (*Augustana Quarterly*, 1933.)

The editor of the *Kirchenblatt* (A. L. C.) said August 25, 1934: "Cooperation must not be established at the cost of truth. It must not be an artificial construction based on externals. Few of us will recommend an organic union of U. L. C. and A. L. C. In this respect we agree with Dr. Graebner, who suggests in the *Lutheran Witness* that some one pull those enthusiasts out of the clouds down to earth with a boat-hook who dream of a union of all Lutherans in one body under a single president." The editorial next questions the much-talked-of unity of American Lutherans. It refers to differences in doctrine that prevailed within the U. L. C. and are even now causing conflicts "which would become much more intolerable if we were united with U. L. C."

The acknowledgment of doctrinal differences as an obstacle not only to organic union, but to relations of fellowship is made by Dr. C. B. Gohdes in his treatise

*Calling across the Fence* (1926). The little book bristles with attacks upon the Missouri Synod. It suggests as a means of bridging over the gap between conservatives and liberals that a "selective" type of pulpit-fellowship and cooperation among Lutherans be declared permissible. "Between brethren of different synods as yet under no formal agreement of pulpit-fellowship there may be more accord than there is between those and the synodical brethren that disapprove their course." Why should not these conservatives in other synods be acknowledged as brethren and the fellowship of pulpit and altar extended to them? Commenting on Professor Gohdes's pamphlet, the *Lutheran Standard* said March 12, 1927: "What is meant is that ministers of one synod, though their body does not stand in fellowship with a certain other synod, may nevertheless fellowship such ministers in that body of whom they have every reason to believe that they hold the same doctrinal position as they themselves. In theory the thought looks all right, but in practise it would break down the whole order of non-fellowship except on the basis of unity of doctrine and practise. For one thing, who would determine who may be fellowshipped and who not? Would each one be supposed to decide that for himself, or would there have to be some synodical commission to hold a sort of inquisition as to who are sufficiently orthodox to be fellowshipped and who are to be ruled out as unorthodox? And who would serve on this commission? The whole thing is impracticable. And why might one not apply the same principle to his own body and say, There are some men in my synod who are not consistent in their practise, perhaps a little shaky on some doctrine, therefore I shall not have pulpit-fellowship with them?—a course that would get one into endless trouble." To us the thing looks wrong also in theory. Gohdes writes: "There is

a Lutheran Church; and where the heart of that Church throbs harmoniously in the hearts of brethren, they are at one" (p. 53). Just so. But will Professor Gohdes tell us just where those throbs are? Can he read the hearts? <sup>4)</sup>

More recently Dr. L. W. Boe issued a pamphlet entitled *God's Movement*, which solemnly summons every Lutheran general body in the United States and Canada to revise the ruling that denies participation in the Lord's Supper to any Lutheran on the ground that the congregation to which this person belongs is connected with a general body which has not officially been declared in altar-fellowship with the general body to which the congregation administering the Sacraments belongs. Much as did Professor Gohdes, Dr. Boe argues that pastors and congregations shall be given the right to admit Lutherans provided they

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4) To introduce the question of personal faith into the general question of fellowship is inadmissible. It is impossible to establish (*positively*) that there is personal faith even in those who are of our own communion and "household of faith." If this is true, — as it certainly is, — then it is not feasible to consider the individual's personal relation to God in establishing grounds for our personal relation to him. We cannot read the heart. But we can hear, and judge of, the profession of the lips. Hence it is clear that in establishing church-fellowship, the deciding factor is that of a common profession. This certainly applies in every case of reception into membership in a local congregation. Not the state of some one's heart, but the expression of his lips and his life are the basis of calling any one our brother. We may be convinced that our own fellow-Lutheran is a sincere Christian, but that is not our reason for being associated with him; the ground of that association is his agreement with us in profession. Conversely, the belief that the individual Methodist or Catholic is a Christian can become no reason for our associating ourselves with him in religious work and worship; his adherence to a heterodox body is the deciding factor in refusing him our fellowship. Anything else is not only impracticable, but unreasonable, if the confessional principle is sound. The duty of acknowledging those as brethren who are one with us in their public profession of Scripture doctrines and principles has as its necessary corollary the duty of refusing fellowship to those who disagree with us in public profession. To deny this is to deny that there is an absolute norm of what Christians are to believe and do, is tantamount, in other words, to a denial of the clearness of God's revelation and the Holy Spirit's witness-bearing.

are "worthy" in doctrine and intention, regardless of the general body to which they belong. He proposes a similar amendment of the rule "Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran preachers," so as to lodge jurisdiction over exchanges of pulpits among Lutherans in the individual pastors, with instruction of course to maintain confessional fidelity, dignity, and edification in their ministry of the Word. Dr. Boe believes the doctrinal unity now existent among Lutherans is so nearly complete as to justify this modification of the Galesburg Rule. By so doing, all Lutherans can have access to the means of grace in any community in which a Lutheran church is located. He urges the general bodies to consider revision of this rule at their next meeting.

We find ourselves in complete agreement with Dr. W. Arndt, whose comment on Dr. Boe's proposition was this:

"1) It is conceivable that a body bearing the Lutheran name is more heterodox than, let us say, a certain Presbyterian communion; hence the mere possession of the name Lutheran cannot be held to entitle a person to a place at our altars or in our pulpits. 2) Whatever action charity may prescribe in certain special cases, no policy regarding pulpit- and altar-fellowship must be adopted which will sanction false teaching. 3) The large Lutheran bodies are not yet in a position to establish pulpit- and altar-fellowship among themselves. There are grave difficulties in the way, which first have to be removed. 4) While it may be true that now and then harm has been done by an overzealous emphasis on purity of doctrine, everybody who is not blind must see that the harm which has come, and is continually coming, to the Church through laxity and indifference in doctrine is far greater." (*Concordia Theological Monthly*, 1934.)

As we wrote a friendly layman of the U. L. C.: "We recognize good Lutherans in all Lutheran bodies. Even so, we recognize good Christians in all Christian denominations. But the question is, Whom shall we fellowship as a brother? Shall we be guided by the belief or even conviction that there are Christians in one body or another?"



How would you determine the actual status of such? Who can read the heart? We are guided simply by the confession of the lips and by outward acts. If these agree, if there is confession of truth and corporate life determined by that confession, then we may have joint worship and work. If the profession is tainted with error, or if true profession is contradicted by unchristian practises openly tolerated, then we have no right to enter fraternal relations."

The *Northwestern Lutheran* (Wisconsin Synod), 1932, published an article entitled "Why can We Not Fellowship with the United Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Church?" It concluded thus:—

"If we *can* fellowship with the United Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Church, it is sin to keep aloof another minute; for then we should be truly Pharisees. But if we come to the saddening conclusion that we *cannot*, then we *dare* not, under pain of doing something against our conscience. And here applies the word of Paul 'Whatsoever is not of faith [conviction] is *sin*,' Rom. 14, 23. And we owe it to our opponents, to our flock, to our conscience, and to God that we make sure *why not*."

"Now, all this is said with hearty appreciation and thankful recognition of the great amount of truly evangelical work done in the bodies under criticism, of the scholarship and zeal and mission endeavor they exhibit. It is also said with full appreciation of the many in the United Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Church who in their heart of hearts do not agree with the synergistic doctrines officially held by their synods and who are conscientiously Lutheran in their pastoral practise. But even with them we cannot openly fellowship until they break their association with the organization that has given the offense."

"In spite of the dark clouds of rationalism (and synergism is principally rationalism), unionism, Calvinism, that loom on the horizon of American Lutheranism, I am still optimistic enough to hope and pray that the American Lutheran Church may yet some day be *one* in doctrine and practise. The obstacles even for an organic union are not insurmountable. The splendid work

of the Intersynodical Committee shows what can be accomplished along truly Scriptural lines."

As stated previously, there must be a frank discussion of those factors which now stand in the way of fraternal acknowledgment. The *Northwestern* refers to the Intersynodical Committee, which labored under official appointment for the Missouri, Wisconsin, Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo synods. There have been many free conferences. We do not claim that all has been done on our part that could have been done in that direction. However, when these free conferences ceased to function, it was not due to the Synodical Conference representatives. Dr. M. Luther Canup reports in the *Lutheran* of September 7, 1933: "In recent years there have been joint meetings held between Missouri Synod Lutheran pastors and the United Lutheran pastors in Greater Detroit. The purpose of these meetings is stated in a recommendation offered by a joint committee: 'We are of the conviction that a closer relationship and ultimate union should be striven for on the grounds of doctrinal understanding.' Three of these meetings were held. Lack of interest and attendance on the part of the United Lutheran pastors terminated these discussion conferences. The Missouri Synod pastors were not only interested, they not only attended, but also expressed regret that the meetings were not continued. The discussion hinged around eight theses, which were prepared and read before the joint conferences by the Rev. W. Hagen, Sr., of the Missouri Synod. . . . Doubtless these joint discussions have been duplicated in other metropolitan centers, or will be. They augur well for a better understanding of each other and ultimately a closer union of all Lutherans."

Before we enter into the discussion of the various American Lutheran bodies, will you please (mentally) underscore this sentence with a red pencil: —

\* By refusing fellowship to a church-body, we do not "excommunicate" that body or declare that there are no Christians in that body.

We believe that there are good Christians in the U. L. C. We believe that there are good Christians in the Norwegian Synod. We believe that there are good Christians in the Presbyterian Church, in the Baptist Church, and among the Methodists, the Episcopalians, and the Catholics. Luther used to say that the best Christians are in the Catholic Church, because, though in the very synagog of Antichrist, and however few in number, they clung to Christ in simple faith. Our grievance is that the good, faithful Christians in those bodies permit errorists to speak in their Church and for their Church and, by supporting, and taking part in, unchristian practises, sin against the Word of God, which forbids alliance with error, Rom. 16, 17.

\* If you still have that red pencil handy, you might as well underscore the following sentence: By quoting false statements of various men, we do not presume to stand in the place of God and pronounce final judgment upon *persons*. Nor do we predicate aught about their personal faith. We do not know the hearts; God does. But we judge *doctrines*, the right which Luther vindicated for every Christian.

Once more: In discussing matters of this kind, we are not acting upon our own initiative, but in obedience to the command that Christians shall at all times be ready to speak for the truth. Besides, we are acting under special provocation. These many years our attitude has been called "un-Lutheran, unchristian, pharisaical, narrow-minded." Editors have often applied the word "aloofness" to our position on the question of fellowship, as though we were a conceited, self-righteous, self-sufficient lot and a hindrance

in the way of Lutheran union. Through the discussion of church union in recent years there runs an innuendo against "Missouri" as if we were "of course" the great problem, the stumbling-block to the efforts of those who want to restore peace in the Church. Is it not time that we say with Paul: "Hear ye my defense which I make now unto you"?

## II. AMERICAN LUTHERANISM — A SURVEY.

### 1. THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.

A merger of the <sup>1</sup>General Synod of the Ev. Luth. Church in the United States, <sup>2</sup>the General Council of the Ev. Luth. Church in North America and the <sup>3</sup>United Synod of the Ev. Luth. Church in the South. These bodies, previous to the union, had consisted of 39 districts (officially called "synods"). The merger was voted by the three constituent bodies November 16, 1918. In the second article of its constitution the United Lutheran Church "receives and holds the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and as the only infallible rule and standard of faith and practise, according to which all doctrines and teachers are to be judged." The doctrinal basis consists of the three Ecumenical Creeds and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. "Section 3. The United Lutheran Church in America receives and holds the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a correct exhibition of the faith and doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded upon the Word of God; and acknowledges all churches that sincerely hold and faithfully confess the doctrines of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to be entitled to the name of Evangelical Lutheran. Section 4. The United Lutheran Church in America recognizes the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large and Small Cate-

chisms of Luther, and the Formula of Concord, as in the harmony of one and the same pure Scriptural faith."

Behind this acknowledgment of the Lutheran Confessions lies a long road of growing Lutheran consciousness. It constitutes a victory for the principles which had been advocated by conservative leaders in the General Council, such men as Krotel, Krauth, Mann, Schaeffer, Seiss, and Schmauk. Indeed, the doctrinal basis of the U. L. C. constitutes a victory for sound Lutheranism over odds which at times seemed overwhelming. We note the adoption of the *Unaltered Augsburg Confession*. This was over the protests of a strong party in the General Synod, which stood for the Reformed view regarding the Sacraments. The recognition of the other Lutheran symbols was even a greater surprise to those who knew the lax elements that were found especially in the General Synod. When it is considered that Reformed bodies without exception have during the past hundred years traveled a downward path towards Higher Criticism and Modernism, the rise of a soundly Lutheran consciousness in the bodies constituting the Merger must be acknowledged with gratitude to God.

As already indicated, in the formation of the new body there had to be a balancing of opposing forces. Some of the original "synods" had been very conservative, others preponderatingly so, others were neutral, still others quite lax in doctrine and practise, permitting pulpit exchange with the Reformed ministers and themselves inclining to the Reformed view of the Sacraments. Some had in their midst institutions of learning that represented the liberal standpoint. To safeguard the freedom of these "synods" to carry on much as before, the following Section 7 was added to Article 3: "In the formation and administration of a general body the synods may know, and deal with,

each other only as synods. In all such cases the official record is to be accepted as evidence of the doctrinal position of each synod and of the principles for which alone the other synods are responsible by connection with it." In this section the new body assumes responsibility only for the official doctrine and practise of the district synods as such, but declines to answer for what the congregations, pastors, and laymen, the professors and editors, may teach and practise. If one synod unfrocks a minister because he has joined a secret order, that is its business. If others not only tolerate preachers who are lodge members, but elect such to office, that is *their* business, unless such toleration is made a matter of the "official record" (probably the transactions or minutes). If one synod harbors a theological seminary of orthodox tendencies, good and well. If another supports a seminary with modernistic tendencies, also good and well. The U. L. C. does not hold itself responsible so long as the departure from Lutheran doctrine is not given recognition in the "official record." But by the adoption of this Section 7, we hold, the body has accepted unionism in principle. It limits the responsibility for false doctrine and practise in such a manner as to conflict with the Scriptural rule of Christian fellowship. This Section 7 of Article 3 in the constitution of the U. L. C. 1) marks the U. L. C. in America as a merger which should never have been consummated and 2) is a bar to relations of fellowship with Lutheran bodies that regard agreement in doctrine as a necessary condition of fellowship.

In order to illustrate the working out of the principle, consider the case of a church in Dayton, O., in which Dr. Fosdick was permitted to speak. Complaint was made by a U. L. C. minister against this fraternizing of a Modernist. The *Lutheran* replied August 6, 1925: "The

Lutheran Church in Dayton, O., is a member of the Ohio Synod U. L. C. If false doctrine has been preached within its boundaries, no doubt the proper authorities will take account of it." October 17, 1929, the same paper said editorially: "A second 'reservation' concerns discipline. The United Lutheran Church did not receive from its synods authority to initiate or conduct proceedings in discipline. Heresy and conduct unbecoming a minister or irregularity of administration by a congregation can be dealt with, but not by the general body. It is a well-known fact that all the synods acknowledge and confess the same doctrinal tenets; but when transgression of these is charged, the investigation is carried on by methods and agencies which were in operation prior to the merger and which were kept where they were first located and maintained."

In the discussion of the disposition to be made of its theological seminaries (the U. L. C. has thirteen) the freedom of synods to lead their own life was strongly emphasized. It was proposed to merge the Susquehanna, Gettysburg, and Philadelphia seminaries. The Alleghany Synod opposed the merger on these grounds: "Evangelism, spontaneity in worship, freer attitude toward other denominations — these were felt to be fundamental traditions of Gettysburg and Susquehanna, and assurance of their continuance is desired." And the East Pennsylvania Synod looked with disfavor upon the move because "one seminary will tend to create a standardized ministry which will be against the best interests of the Church. There will always be two trends in our Church, and wisely so. Each has a contribution to make. We need a conservative type and a more liberal type. The strength of our Church has been its varied types. Our Church needs at least two seminaries in this State." West Pennsylvania registered against the merger because the "domination of one type of teaching

and insistence upon uniformity of practise" might from time to time "prevent freedom of thought."

The principle which permits fraternal relations between such discordant elements within the same body has necessarily resulted in a larger unionism, a willingness to fellowship all churches, whether in America or abroad, that bear the Lutheran name. It works out, much against the desire of the more conservative, in a unionism also with Reformed sects.

The old General Synod frankly approved of such relations. The Council in 1868 declared that preachers are to be excluded from its pulpits concerning whom "there is just reason to doubt whether they will preach the pure truth of God's Word as taught in the Confessions of our Church." Lutheran ministers were permitted to preach in the pulpits of other churches, "unless the circumstances imply, or seem to imply, a fellowship with error or schism or a restriction on the unreserved expression of the whole counsel of God." In both resolutions there is a begging of the question, which from the outset made them unworkable. What they gave with the right hand they took back with the left. The same convention declared: "Heretics and fundamentally false teachers are to be excluded from the Lord's Table." But two years later the term "fundamental errorists" was so defined as to eliminate reference to "those who are the victims of involuntary mistake" and to restrict the term to "those who wilfully, wickedly, and persistently desert, in whole or in part, the Christian faith" and those who "overturn or destroy the foundation" of faith. The Akron-Galesburg Rule of 1872—1875 prescribed: "1) The rule is: Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran ministers only. Lutheran altars are for Lutheran communicants only." But the subsequent paragraphs permitted of exceptions, and while the more conservative men in the



General Council preferred to emphasize the rule rather than the exceptions allowed, Liberals made use of the loophole, and at the time of the Merger in 1918 some areas of the General Council were as liberal in extending fellowship to the Reformed as any General Synod men.

The division of opinion on this point was clear to every observer. No one can find fault with the view of Dr. G. H. Gerberding, who wrote in 1914: "The Lutheran Church as a whole has always been opposed to such unionistic practises as make her distinctive teachings seem to be no different from, and no better than, the teachings of the Reformed churches. If the Lutheran pastor freely exchanges pulpits with his Reformed neighbors, invites them into his pulpit, and publicly glories in the agreement of his Church with theirs and sometimes even exalts theirs above his own, does he not give away practically everything that makes his Church, her faith, and practise different from theirs? Does he not compromise the truth of his creeds and catechism? Does he not by his conduct make the impression that the difference between the churches is so small that one need pay no attention to it? Might not many of his own people conclude that one Church is about as good as another and that it makes no difference to which of them one belongs?" (*Problems and Possibilities*, p. 155.) The voice of T. E. Schmauk was so constantly raised against unionism with the sects (and secret orders) that it cost him the presidency of the U. L. C. when the Merger was formed. As late as 1917 he had said in the *Lutheran*: "The Lutheran faith has suffered terribly in the past by attempts of union and cooperation with various Christian denominations and tendencies. Usually they have penetrated insidiously into our spirit and poisoned our own life-roots and taken possession of our palaces." And as recently as 1927 the *Lutheran* said editorially (January 27):

“Unionism is certainly not the remedy for the schisms which exist. The word it conjures with is fellowship, not faith; but what is fellowship worth if convictions dear to the believer as life must be thrown to the winds? That unionism insists upon. What unionism has done in America to rob the Lutheran Church of its proper heritage and power is a story full of interest and warning. . . . The Lutheran Church cannot surrender its confessional principle and be its true self. It knows of no true fellowship apart from a fellowship of faith.” In some district synods of the U. L. C. there has been enough Lutheran conscience to exclude ministers guilty of heresy, as in the famous case of Rev. F. E. Smith, who was deposed by the Pittsburgh synod because he had taught “that the Apostles’ Creed contains statements contrary to fact; that the Bible is not the only infallible rule of faith and life; that the Augsburg Confession is an antique symbol, and that the death of Christ was not an efficacious sacrifice or atonement.” Other synods, however, tolerate a liberalism as radical as that of Rev. Smith and the exercise of fraternal relations with sectarians has become the order of the day.

The decay of sound practise has affected also the official attitude towards the Galesburg restriction on altar-fellowship. An editorial article in the *Lutheran* of February 5, 1931, charges that an ecclesiastical body has no right to make rules governing the practise of its congregations in matters involving articles of faith. “The enactment of a blanket rule, which resulted in refusing the Lord’s Supper to one worthy of receiving it and seeking its benefits on the ground that his synod did not belong to the General Council was an illustration of ecclesiastical seizure of power.” The Galesburg Rule, even with its loopholes, an example of “ecclesiastical seizure of power”! A protest was voiced against this view in a later issue by Dr. John

C. Mattes, who urged that "the reception of the Lord's Supper in a particular congregation or particular communion has as one of its objects the confession of the pure faith as against the false or mingled"; but the position defended in this contribution was disavowed in an editorial appearing in the same issue.

In the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America the U. L. C. holds "a consultative relationship." It looks upon this type of membership as safeguarding the confessional principle, while at the same time "this partial membership is not indicative of hostility to an idea of interdenominational cooperation." The membership satisfies the liberal element; the "consultative" pacifies the conservatives.

Union churches, composed of Lutheran and Reformed congregations owning the same church and served by a Lutheran and a Reformed preacher, exist to the present day as a result of the broad unionism of one hundred years ago. In some cases there are two separate groups worshipping in the same building; in others there is an organic union of Lutheran and Reformed. In every case there are at least occasional union services.

There are men of General Synod antecedents who are absolutely opposed to unionism with the sects. On the other hand, there are men of General Council origin who will agree with the writer in the *Lutheran* of March 22, 1928: "The state of mind that permits a person to believe that the Lutheran Church has an especial lease on truth above all other denominations is a condition we cannot comprehend. We are constantly called upon to apologize for the narrowness and bigotry of the Church we love, and I fear there is much truth in the accusations. To assume that the Presbyterians, for instance, do not preach the Gospel as faithfully and truly as we do is certainly most

narrow, to say the least. . . . I have preached and prayed and worshiped in the same church and pulpit with Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Evangelicals, Dunkards, and Salvation Army men to the edification of my own soul and the glory of God."

What we have witnessed during the past twelve years is the gradual breakdown of the spirit that made possible the Galesburg Rule. More and more the exceptions are becoming the rule. The bars are down. Unionism with the Reformed sects is no longer a controversial question. Membership is held, almost without exception, in the local ministerial alliances. And the line is not drawn against Liberals and Modernists. Dean Shailer Mathews of the Divinity School of Chicago University speaks in a Dayton church of the U. L. C. In Rochester, U. L. C. people unite in a service at which the invocation is pronounced by a Unitarian. At the funeral of a Mason in Indianapolis a U. L. C. man officiates with a Unitarian (December 9, 1927). In Sioux City another takes part in a service with the local Rabbi (May 6, 1928). When the local Federation of Churches has its annual exchange of pulpits, the U. L. C. preachers follow suit. In Baltimore they have preached in Methodist, United Brethren, and Universalist churches. At Des Moines, Iowa, a union service was held in which a Rabbi read the Scripture-lesson, a priest gave prayer, and the U. L. C. preacher delivered the sermon. At Pontiac, Mich., the Luther League arranges a Reformation Day with Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, Evangelical, and Baptist speakers. At Niagara Falls the U. L. C. congregation participates in services arranged by a committee of which the local Rabbi was chairman. (A. L. C. and Missouri Synod congregations protested by sending a letter to the press. In the *Lutheran* of February 15 the U. L. C. minister defends the arrangements because

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it was not a program that supplanted the regular church service. Taking editorial notice of the incident, the *Lutheran* claims that "unionism" did not motivate the pastor, "as little as it did the Catholic priest, who also participated. . . . In the history of the United Lutheran Church there is not a scintilla of evidence on which to base the accusation of unionism." (!) At Reen Memorial Church in St. Louis on Ash Wednesday, February 14, 1934, Rabbi Thurman delivered the sermon. It was the third time Thurman spoke at this church. The Apostles' Creed was not confessed, but the Lord's Prayer was prayed by Rabbi, pastor, and congregation together. Consistently with such practises the Evangelical-Reformed union was hailed by the *Lutheran* as "a sister's marriage." The editorial read in part: "The *Lutheran* extends the good wishes of the United Lutheran Church to the newly formed Evangelical and Reformed Church. The union between these two Christian bodies has followed sincere prayer and patient study of conditions. The objective is more effective service to our Lord and the firmer establishment of His kingdom on earth. The advantages of union in economy and thoroughness of combined administration justify coalition where agreements have been reached. The fact of merging indicates that agreements have been reached. Good results should, and no doubt will, follow. We cordially greet our new neighbors."<sup>5)</sup> In comparison with

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5) This was more than at least one U. L. C. pastor could stomach. In a letter to the editor he said: "A Lutheran should have nothing to do with churches that are infested and ruled by Modernists, because they are enemies of the Triune God. If we believe that the Lutheran Church is the true Church, we cannot extend good wishes to any so-called Church which works against us and tears down what we build up. . . . The *Lutheran* should discourage the prevailing tendency among some of the pastors of the United Lutheran Church in America to make common cause and express their sympathy with Calvinistic and modernistic groups. Either we are with our Lord, or we are against Him."

such scandals it does not seem so objectionable when Dr. F. H. Knubel, president of the United Lutheran Church, officiates at a funeral jointly with Reformed preachers (June 20, 1927).

Of dogmatic handbooks used in the seminaries three have been available for this study. The Biblical Dogmatics of Andrew G. Voigt, Columbia, S. C. (1916), is not in harmony with the Lutheran doctrine on the states of Christ (p. 115), is doubtful on the atonement (p. 136), rejects verbal inspiration (p. 156), and misunderstands election (p. 218 ff.). P. L. Mellenbruch's *The Doctrines of Christianity* (1931) is a far more orthodox work. We have question-marks against his treatment of justification ("subjective" only; p. 115), of predestination (p. 136 ff.), on the intermediate state for the dead (p. 202), and the conversion of Israel (p. 206). Latest of all is *The Christian Faith*, by Joseph Stump. I quote from a review in the *Lutheran Witness*: "Any one who has a conception of the cross-currents of doctrine in the synods now united in the U. L. C. will congratulate that body upon the sound Lutheran teaching contained in this handbook. It guarantees to us that at least in the theological seminary over which Dr. Stump presides there has been no concession to Modernism and that the preachers there trained will be equipped with the doctrine that makes men wise unto salvation. This does not mean that we can subscribe to every thesis of this book." (The doctrine of imputation, of election, of inspiration, are not treated as we are accustomed to do, and we have doubts on other points.) The position of President Jacobs of the Philadelphia seminary is well known. When inducted into office (1927), he maintained that the Bible is not the Word of God, but merely contains the Word of God, a doctrine which he upheld as recently as 1933 in the *Lutheran* (January 12), when he distinctly

said regarding the terms "Word of God and Scriptures": "In Lutheran theology they are not equated." Surely one who refuses to identify Scripture with the Word of God no longer accepts the Bible as the divine authority. Elsewhere the *Lutheran* has said editorially that inspiration is not a process uniquely limited to the Scriptures, but goes on continually (August 1, 1929). The author of the article, John W. Horine, said regarding the sacred writers: "There had been 'inspiration' for many other servants of God besides them and long before them; and after their peculiar task was finished and there was no longer need to receive and record a single word, 'inspiration' continued, and continues, by the grace of God. . . . Inspiration by the Holy Spirit is not to be restricted to the act of composing and recording the Holy Scriptures, and it is not a thing of the past only. It is also a thing of the present, and if it should cease (which God forbid!), faith itself would cease and the kingdom of God in this world." This is not Lutheran, but typically Reformed doctrine.

Herbert C. Alleman, Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Literature and Theology in the theological seminary at Gettysburg, is the author of *The Old Testament — a Study*, issued in 1935. It is a publication of the United Lutheran Church, written by an author who has taught for twenty years at one of its recognized theological seminaries, is printed by its official publishing house, and is endorsed by the Parish- and Church-school Board of the United Lutheran Church, under whose auspices it was prepared. It was favorably reviewed in the *Lutheran* February 7, 1935. Discussing the sources of the Old Testament books, the author finds no place for inspiration, but for Hebrew and Babylonian traditions instead. The Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is rejected, and its prophecies are regarded as being not different from those of the Egyptians. The

author has the higher critical idea of the Old Testament views concerning God. Says Dr. W. A. Maier: "On page after page the reader beholds a clasping of hands with higher critics and radical exegetes, with historical reconstructionists and archeologists, who have permanently disavowed the final authority of Scriptures."

And the softening of confessional fiber is being felt in the Sunday-school literature of the Church. O. F. Nolde has written a *Guide Book in Catechetical Instruction*, which is highly praised in a *Lutheran* review, but which is so unsound, especially on the Sacraments, so weak in its statement on the need of a Savior, that conservative men in the U. L. C. have rejected the book and, despairing of receiving any official help, have written their own outlines for the instruction of catechumens.<sup>6)</sup>

Dr. Edwin Heyl Delk has never rescinded the modernistic views which he published some thirty years ago, when he denied the Scriptural doctrine of the atonement and other fundamentals. The familiar note of the social gospel (which is no Gospel at all, but a legalistic invention) creeps out in his contribution to the *Philadelphia Record* of January 2, 1926: "If we are in dead earnest in our faith and hope and purpose to bring into social life the life of God, we must unite in the high purpose of the Kingdom." He made an address at the installation of three new professors in Gettysburg Seminary, in which he stated that he had once "fully believed in the verbal inspiration of every book of the Bible," but had since accepted the views of Kaftan and Hermann (men who have rejected the authority of the Scriptures). In the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* of January 22, 1924, Delk was quoted as declaring the theory of evolution to be "irrefutable" and as having uttered the fol-

6) One of these passed through the writer's hands for the purpose of criticism and revision.



lowing sentences: "As long as man is the special creation of God, the method of the creation is of secondary importance. The day of the literal interpretation of the Bible has passed. The clergy must use reason on their interpretation of the revelations from God to get their real meaning. For, after all, the voice of reason is the voice of God." We addressed a letter to him September 2, which concluded: "I am loath to believe that you hold such extreme views and would request from you a few lines in disavowal of the sentiments quoted." No reply was received.

On the Lutheran symbols some leaders have not yet advanced beyond the position of the General Council in the sixties. Regarding confessional subscription, Rev. John Aberly said in 1928: "If the regulative truths are held, one can allow freedom in those that are not regulative." (*Lutheran Church Quarterly*.)

On evolution Rev. Paul Wagner Roth said in the *Lutheran* of September 11, 1919: "The theory that there is a serial development from the lowest forms of animal life to man, who stands on the highest rung of the ladder of evolution, is accepted by a very large number of scientific men. If they base it on the kind of reasoning that Professor Ameghino employs, it will be a long time before their theory is proved true. Meanwhile it is to be remembered that there may be a development of our animal man, but that at some stage in this development man has been endowed by the Creator with an immortal spirit. He wasn't a man until he received that spirit."

Dr. John A. W. Haas, president of Muehlenberg College, in his *What Ought I to Believe?* solves the problem Creation or evolution? by accepting creation through evolution. His view regarding inspiration is summarized thus: "We accept authority in religion, not because of any church degree concerning infallibility, but because we sense

and feel the claim of divine truth through the convictions it has wrought in us." "The early position of Protestant doctrine put an infallible Bible over against an infallible organization. It is supposed that the original manuscripts of the books of the Bible were without error in every detail. No one ever saw or can prove such an infallible set of books; but their existence is made an article of faith." The doctrine of inspiration is also denied in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* of 1931 by J. Huebner. He identifies belief in the inerrancy of the Bible with the view of those who teach a mechanical theory of inspiration and rejects the teaching of those who "stress the literal inerrancy of the Bible in all particulars." Regarding Genesis and Exodus the admission is made that there are doubtless "early myths and traditions which the source writers used." (July 19, 1923.)

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Strangely petulant are some of the reviewers in U. L. C. papers when they are investigating the merits of conservative authors. Mr. J. M. Stamfield has written a polemical work entitled *Modernism*. A reviewer in the *Lutheran* characterizes the viewpoint of this author as "wooden, rigid, and narrow." "The author believes 'Christianity is Bible religion,' and to him every sentence is absolutely true in every detail. The truth, historical, scientific, as well as religious, is final and fixed. From this position he studies Modernism and condemns it," etc. (May 26, 1927). Even conservative works of U. L. C. men have fared badly in the reviews. Professor Klotsche's excellent *Christian Symbolics* received very unfavorable mention in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* because of its soundly Lutheran position.

Our objection to the name *United Lutheran Church* is justified by such fundamental disagreement among the leaders of that body. Even such men as L. S. Keyser and the late Prof. G. H. Gerberding, who surely cannot be

classified as Liberals, have characterized the Missouri Synod's doctrine on election as "un-Lutheran," "Calvinistic," a doctrine that will fence us off "as a peculiar sect in the Lutheran Church" (Gerberding, *Problems and Possibilities*, p. 164 ff.). The late Theo. E. Schmauk, on the other hand, stood four-square on the Missouri position, as do all those in the Merger who have accepted his wonderful book *The Confessional Principle* as their theological guide. Or read the chapter on "Predestination" in Dr. Little's book *Disputed Doctrines* (1933). It presents the pure Formula-of-Concord doctrine which we profess. And Dr. C. H. Little is Professor of Systematic Theology in a U. L. C. seminary in Ontario. Let us add that he takes the soundly Lutheran position on inspiration, on the millennium, the conversion of Israel, Hades, justification, the Sabbath, women as church officers, the lodge, union services, Buchmanism, and other questions, — every chapter in his book at dagger's ends with the doctrine of other theological leaders of the U. L. C.! As much must be said about Prof. E. H. Klotsche's *Christian Symbolics*, already mentioned. This is a large work touching upon every point of controversy between the Lutheran and other churches. Its positions are soundly orthodox throughout. But his book could not possibly serve as a text in certain U. L. C. seminaries. Consider such questions as the Sabbath, in which both Klotsche and Little give the Scriptural answer. Many preachers, especially of the old General Synod, are to this day Sabbatarians. The wide cooperation with the W. C. T. U. and the Anti-Saloon League belongs into the same category. The correct Scriptural position and Reformed error live under the same roof. The lines of cleavage are often to be discerned in the various departments of the same church-paper. The *Lutheran* said editorially, August 23, 1934, regarding the

charge of Modernism: "An intimate acquaintance with the controlling sentiment of the body would annul any indictment of trends away from the spirit of true Lutheranism." On another page of the same issue a reviewer discusses a book by Dr. P. E. Kretzmann of St. Louis and calls it "ultraconservative" because "it demands verbal inspiration of the Scriptures" —!

A word as to the position of the U. L. C. on the lodge. The claim was made that, whereas we have a hard, legalistic practise, the Merger is evangelical; it uses the "educational method." It does nothing of the kind. The most that can be said is that there is still some public testimony (unofficial) against the lodge. But the accepted policy is one of unquestioning toleration. The *Lutheran* can afford to print in the story of "A Life Given to the Service of the Church" these memoranda of a layman: "In Masonry I was treasurer of my lodge for forty-two years; of my Masonic chapter thirty years; commander of Knights Templars thirteen years; chairman of Board of Trustees of Grand Lodge twenty-four years; of the Grand Chapter twenty-three years." (August 16, 1928.) We have letters from U. L. C. pastors who distinctly say that they acknowledge the evils of lodgery, but do not consider it their duty to exclude lodge men from their congregations. Others are deeply troubled in their conscience that they must tolerate the lodge in view of the attitude of not a few pastors and of officers (in 1920, 200 preachers of the United Lutheran Church were members of the Masonic Order). Even on the part of some men who have an evangelical message in their pulpit there is a lack of comprehension of the lodge evil. Services to which Masons and other lodge men are especially invited are common. Some of the district synods have articles forbidding ministers to join antichristian secret orders; but these provisions are quite generally

ignored, and in more than twenty years we have heard of only one case of discipline.

Especially in strongholds of the Synodical Conference missionaries of the U. L. C. openly announce that the lodge is no issue with them. "This new congregation bars no one for membership in the lodge" (in the Beaver Dam, Wis., *Daily Citizen* of June 15, 1932). "To All Unchurched: Members of the Masonic and all other fraternal orders or any who may be desirous of making a Christian church affiliation, we welcome you. Every effort will be made to care for all your spiritual needs. 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out,' John 6, 37." (*Saginaw Daily News*, February 27, 1932.) Instances could be multiplied almost indefinitely. Most grievous of all is the open bid made for members whom we have excommunicated on account of membership in some idolatrous secret order. Some congregations have been built up almost exclusively from such excommunicated Synodical Conference Lutherans. It is true that a weakness in matters of discipline also regarding lodges is not divisive of fellowship. This is the historic position of our Synod. But it is another matter when our folds are torn into factions, when members are enticed from their shepherds, and when those excluded according to the Word of God are given every privilege of the Christian Church in a congregation of Lutheran name. Such practises are indeed divisive, and a settlement of policy regarding this most odious type of sheep-stealing must be one of the first questions to be adjusted as a condition of fruitful deliberations on Lutheran union.

As an organization the United Lutheran Church stands in a peculiar relation to its constituent synods (districts) and their congregations. We have noted already that the General Body does not judge of doctrines or practises as long as they are tolerated within the individual district

(synod). Appeals can be made to the General Body; but these are handled by the Commission of Adjudication, which has "the final judicial authority." (*Lutheran*, October 16, 1930.) When the "Commission of Adjudication" (Dr. H. E. Jacobs, president) reported to the Washington convention of the United Lutheran Church (October 19—27, 1920), the president of the United Lutheran Church (Dr. F. H. Knubel) "ruled that the convention" (485 delegates!) "could take no action on the Report of the Commission of Adjudication and that therefore it was to be printed in the minutes as submitted," (*Minutes*, p. 115.) In the United Lutheran Church "it is not intended to give the right of appeal to any person adversely affected by the action of a synod from a decision of a synod." (*Minutes*, p. 113.) On the other hand while accepting in theory that the congregation is the primary body (Constitution, Article III, Section 3), it really looks upon the congregation simply as "the church localized." "The greatest powers lie in the synod. 'The judgments of the synod are the judgments of the Church.'" (*Lutheran*, October 16, 1930.) Strictly speaking, the United Lutheran Church has a synodical form of government in which the synod has not advisory only, but has legislative power. In matters of lawsuits for the title to church property this factor has been urged, and in every case successfully.

This is worth a little more detailed study. The form of church government is an adiaphoron so long as it respects the preaching of the sound doctrine and the integrity of the Sacraments. We can have fraternal relations with bodies which are organized under bishops, as in Luther's day and later; or under consistories and councils, as in other sections of the early Lutheran Church. But a difference which may not be divisive may look very great to our lay people nevertheless, once it is understood. There is hardly

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anything our people are more jealous of than their congregational independence. Now, the U. L. C. stands for the legislative power of synods. Its constitution provides for legislation by delegates representing the district synods in the General Body, and such legislation is binding on the congregations and synods in those very things in which our Synod exerts only advisory power, for instance, the raising of funds, the laying of apportionments, the entrance on relations with other bodies, etc., etc. The editor of the *Lutheran*, August 2, 1934, distinctly said: "It is incidental to Lutheranism in America that the congregation has gained a reputation for autonomy and authority which it does not deserve." And again he refers to the "unmerited emphasis upon the complete integrity of the congregation." Our people have been trained otherwise. They have inherited this "emphasis."

Even within the past year (1934) the tide of Liberalism and Modernism seems to have gained in momentum in the U. L. C. Prof. Theo. Laetsch made these comments in the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, February, 1935: "Why are such books as Cadman's *Prophets of Israel*, Bewer's *Literature of the Old Testament*, recommended without a word of protest against their liberalistic, modernistic tendencies (*Luth. Church Quart.*, Vol. VII, 80 f.), and why does the *Short Bible* by Goodspeed and Smith receive the following praise: 'An amazing amount of historical and literary information, written in a fascinating, non-technical style, is packed into them' (the introductions to the various books)? (*Lutheran Church Quarterly*, Vol. VII, p. 85.) Why is Shailer Mathews, the well-known Modernist, paid this tribute without a word of criticism: 'Although the Dean passed his seventieth birthday on May 26 and has retired from his position on the Chicago faculty, he is by no means at the end of his period of

service. He is still in the full vigor of his powers and will continue with voice and pen to carry on and enrich American theological thought' (Vol. VII, p. 340)? Why are statements such as the following permitted to be made publicly: 'I would not be understood as committing myself to an acceptance of the entire theology of Luther. His emphasis on the exacting sternness of God led him, after the manner of Anselm, to dwell too much on the equivalence of sin and justice in his conception of the Atonement' (Vol. VII, p. 40)?"

This is not the same as saying that "the bars are down." It is known that Mount Airy has refused to graduate members of the senior class who denied the Virgin Birth, the Atonement, and the physical resurrection. The New York Ministerium has declined to ordain a man who confessed modernistic views. Some district synods of the U. L. C. within the past decade have expelled, or have refused to receive, ministers on account of their membership in the Masonic Order. Such action was taken by the New York Ministerium and by the New York and New England Synod.

The United Lutheran Church has some splendid theologians and consecrated and intelligent laymen. We have had cordial correspondence with many of these men, notably also with the late M. G. G. Scherer, secretary of the U. L. C. There seems to be an honest recognition of the fact that instead of "merging the best and submerging the rest," the Merger of 1918 has not greatly helped the conservative element of the older Lutheran bodies. The endeavors to "submerge" what was un-Lutheran has not succeeded. Factions characterize the U. L. C., and lines of cleavage run horizontally, vertically, and diagonally through the entire body. To look upon the Merger therefore as a rallying-point for Lutheran union is simply to



ignore facts so evident and so easily ascertained that ignorance on this point is hardly to be excused.

At its meeting in Savannah, Ga., the U. L. C. adopted resolutions "with the view of making Lutheranism in this country present a united front." Their convention resolved to "recognize as Evangelical Lutheran all Christian groups which accept the Holy Scriptures as the only rule and standard for faith and life, by which all doctrines are to be judged, and who sincerely receive the historic Confessions of the Lutheran Church (especially the unaltered Augsburg Confession) 'as a witness of the truth and a presentation of the correct understanding of our predecessors' (Formula of Concord, Part II, Introd.). . . . Inasmuch as our now separated Lutheran church-bodies all subscribe these same Confessions, it is our sincere belief that we already possess a firm basis on which to unite in one Lutheran Church in America." On these resolutions Dr. W. Arndt commented as follows in the *Concordia Theological Monthly* of January, 1935: "1) With the desire for union expressed in the resolutions we find ourselves in hearty agreement. Is there any devout Missourian who does not often pray to God for the removal of the divisions, schisms, differences, and misunderstandings that have hindered the progress of Lutheranism during the last hundred years? 2) It would be a fatal mistake to make a public declaration of unity if the reality of it is absent. 3) The historic Four Points appear to be as live to-day as ever, and if anything seems certain, it is this, that, while progress has been made in the right direction, real unity has not been as yet attained as to these issues. 4) In the last decades there has arisen a new issue, indicated by the words 'higher criticism' and 'inspiration of the Bible,' on which it seems the various Lutheran bodies are not occupying common ground. Any attempt to bring about agreement between the synods will have to take this issue into consideration."

See also Dean Fritz's Introduction to the present volume.

It is not true that the Missouri Synod alone takes notice of Modernism in the United Lutheran Church. Dr. Herman A. Preus, writing in the *Lutheran Herald* (Norwegian) of February 20, 1935, said: "Let us awaken from our peaceful, smug satisfaction as we tell the world that the Lutheran Church is free from the disease of Modernism. It is only a few days ago that a well-known scholar and theologian from the East told the writer that the Lutheran Church of the East is more advanced in its modernistic tendencies than is the Presbyterian Church itself. . . . Here is something else than a fight between synods or nationals. Here is a call to arms to the forces of truth against error, of Lutheran Bible Christians against Lutheran Modernists. It is a battle in which synodical lines will eventually be forgotten. The battle is hardly begun, because we have been too blind and too slow and too satisfied to identify our Lutheranism with Bible truth, not realizing that many bear the name of Luther who no longer bear the name of Jesus Christ and therefore are not worthy of either name. When that battle is under way and pressing toward its decision, there will be a new alinement of Lutherans. Old synod lines will give way to new borders, and then, by the grace of God, the Lutheran brothers in Christ, of whatever nationality and whatever synod, will find themselves fighting shoulder to shoulder for truth against error, for an infallible Bible against a human book, for a divine Christ against a mere human Christ."<sup>7)</sup>

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7) We agree with Dr. J. T. Mueller, who quotes Dr. Preus and then adds: "Unfortunately he does not specify his statements. . . . We do not wish to deny that what he says is true; but where is the enemy? Who are the ones that advocate or practise Modernism in the East? And just how does Lutheran Modernism manifest

We have read a conference paper delivered by Rev. John C. Lang of Columbus, O., a member of the A. L. C. It treats the question of fellowship with the United Lutheran Church. Rev. Lang asks, What is the attitude of the U. L. C. on the question of pulpit- and altar-fellowship? He quotes from the A. L. C. charter the rejection of "unionism in all its forms." He also refers to Rev. Schillinger's pamphlet *Why Lutherans do Not Participate in Union Services* (which is good and which states the argument against unionism with all possible force). Then he cites the A. L. C. paragraph on secret societies, which are declared to be antichristian; also the Minneapolis Theses, which prohibit pastors from affiliating with them. Then Rev. Lang quotes from the U. L. C. constitution and from the 1920 "Declaration of Principles." He says regarding the attitude towards pulpit- and altar-fellowship: "It is far from being clear, and it leaves much to be desired." "The constitution of the United Lutheran Church entrusts discipline to the individual synods; and what good are the doctrinal and confessional statements of a body which does not have the power of discipline?" Also regarding the lodge he finds only vague statements, and once more he asks: "What do all these antilodge references amount to when the United Lutheran Church as such has no power of discipline, but grants all such power to the individual synods?" He then points out that practise lags far behind profession. He quotes instances, mentioning dates and places. A minister of the United Lutheran Church, a Unitarian preacher, and the Masonic

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itself in the East? All these are questions that must be answered squarely and minutely. If there are Modernists, let them be pointed out and their errors be mentioned. . . . Let us not forget that unionism also is Modernism and that, unless we fight unionism, that subtle, but pernicious foe which has wrought so much havoc in the sectarian churches of our country, we are unable to fight gross Modernism effectively." — C. T. M., 1935.

lodge are in charge of a funeral. President Glenn Frank, radical, speaks in a U. L. C. church. Another minister of the U. L. C. invites by way of "a most fraternal communication" Protestants of every race, color, and previous condition of orthodoxy to attend the ordination of an Episcopal bishop. Then he quotes an incisive statement by Rev. Julius Bodensieck (A. L. C.), who in the *Kirchenblatt* said: "We do not scent an out-and-out Modernism in the United Lutheran Church, but we cannot overlook the fact that within the United Lutheran Church marked differences of teaching are in evidence, which have already caused clashes within the United Lutheran Church and which would be all the more unbearable if we were united with that body. Without doubt we do the conservative circles within the United Lutheran Church a greater service by pointing out these defects than by overlooking them and acting as though they did not exist."

Let us be quite clear on this point. Many have been led to regard Missouri as a legalistic body, which at once proceeds to curse with book, bell, and candle every person that does not conform to strict Lutheran standards in doctrine and practise. This is a false impression. We of the Missouri Synod are able to bear long, even within our own body, with those who err *through ignorance* or who *through weakness* fail to conform their practise to their Christian profession. But we insist that all errorists, and all who depart from sound churchly practise, shall be admonished and, if that fail, be publicly rebuked, and that, when no remonstrances are of avail, such a person shall be "rejected," as Paul writes to Titus. Not because there is un-Lutheran practise, but because such practise is *openly tolerated*; not because there are errorists in the U. L. C., but because these false teachers are permitted to sow their false doctrines unrebuked by their synodical body and are

even recognized as leaders in the Church do we object to the easy and thoughtless conclusion that bodies subscribing to the same confessional platform should clasp hands and agree to "let bygones be bygones."

While we, let us repeat it, do not intend to pass judgment upon the personal faith of the men here quoted, — the Lord alone knoweth the heart, and charity hopeth all things, — we do believe and hold that the toleration which is shown their errors by the bodies in which they hold membership, and the recognition which they receive through appointment to high office, is proof that the synods which have so low an appraisal of loyalty to our Confessions cannot plead: "We stand on the Confessions; what more do you want?" A contributor to the General Council *Lutheran*, nearly fifty years ago, ably discussed the question of loyalty to confessions. Taking for his text the oft-heard remark "We all stand on the Augsburg Confession; there let us stand," he said: "But it makes all the difference *how* 'we all stand.' The simple matter of standing is not the real criterion. The *how* 'we all' stand is the matter to be looked at. Are 'we all' standing *squarely, erectly, and truly* on the Augsburg Confession? . . . It is absolutely folly to say that the Augsburg Confession is the adopted standard of our whole Church's confession and practise when many things are said and practised differently by the various portions of the Lutheran Church. Let us have unity of faith, spirit, *doctrine, practise.*"

It still makes all the difference *how* we stand.

## 2. THE AUGUSTANA SYNOD.

This is a large body, which includes within its membership practically all the Swedish Lutheran congregations in the United States. Formerly a member of the General Council, it severed its connection with that body in 1918, when the Merger took place.

The history of the Augustana Synod is less marked probably than that of any other American Lutheran body by internal controversies. Mainly on account of the barrier of language it has taken little or no part in the quarrels that have disturbed the relations of other Lutheran bodies. Strongly conservative in its Lutheranism during the earlier decades of its history, it has been exposed to influences from two directions that have drained it of much Lutheran strength. These influences are the Modernism of the state church of Sweden and the Reformed influence of the American sects. If we wish to analyze still further, we may say that this latter influence has been a modernistic one through the American university and chiliastic through the acceptance which modern dispensationalism has gained.

Previous to 1918, when the Augustana Synod was still a member of the General Council, there had been much agitation among the Swedes on the question of their relation to the General Council. This was natural for two reasons. In its organization it had the character of a general body as no other synod in the Council had. And the nationalistic feeling was strong. In 1915 this resolution was adopted: "That the Augustana Synod respectfully requests the General Council to so revise its constitution that the Augustana Synod no longer be placed in the relation of a district synod, but be recognized as a general body in order that the General Council may become both in principle and practise a deliberative and advisory body only, so as to facilitate a federation of all the Lutheran bodies in our land." The break came in 1918. At the same time, the *Lutheran Companion* contained the following article (1918, p. 639): "An Unexpected Invitation. One Sunday afternoon last summer I attended the exercises held in connection with the laying of the corner-stone of the splendid new schoolhouse and parish-hall of the Im-

manuel (German) Lutheran Church in this city. The main address was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Frederick Brand of Springfield, Ill., Vice-President of the Missouri Synod. At the close of the exercises (which, by the way, were entirely in the English language) I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Brand, who, when he heard that I belonged to the Augustana Synod, exclaimed enthusiastically: 'We [the officials of the Missouri Synod] were very glad to hear that your synod refused to join the Merger'; and continuing, he made this remarkable statement: 'Now, the next step that I hope they will take is to come over to us, the Synodical Conference; and I can assure you that we shall reach out both hands to meet you.' To illustrate, he grasped my hand and shook it warmly. I was quite surprised to hear such an invitation extended to us from one who, next to President Pfoth, is the highest official in the Missouri Synod. However, I could do nothing more than thank him for his solicitation and his good opinion of us as a synod. I have always heard that the Missouri Synod as a whole has in the past years looked with disfavor upon the Augustana Synod; therefore Dr. Brand's words of good will came unexpectedly and unlooked for. Would the Augustana Synod consider such an invitation if it ever were officially extended? I do not know whether this possible union has ever been discussed or indeed ever been thought of by our members. The above is an exact quotation of Dr. Brand's words, spoken with evident sincerity on the 11th of August, 1918." (Rock Island, Ill., J. P. Peterson.)

June 6, 1919, I addressed Editor Bengtson of the *Lutheran Companion* as follows: ". . . Last year about this time I was in St. Paul on synodical business, and I took occasion to speak to the president of Minnesota College, Dr. Frank Nelson, on this subject. I informed him then

that the possibility of establishing fraternal relations with the Missouri Synod should by no means be treated as a vagary. A month or two later I read an editorial note in your paper referring to an expression of Vice-President Brand of our body, who said in conversation with one of your men that our Synod should be delighted to enter into negotiations which might lead to relations of Christian fellowship. Since that time I have often thought of writing you or the editor of *Augustana*, or President Brandelle in an unofficial capacity, suggesting that the relations between Missouri and Augustana be made a subject of discussions by joint committees. We have such a Committee on Intersynodical Relations, the chairman of which is Prof. G. Mezger of Concordia Seminary. I do not feel myself empowered to approach the forthcoming meeting of your body with any suggestion along these lines. However, speaking merely as a member of the Missouri Synod, I would say that the Missouri Synod should not be overlooked when Augustana appoints a committee to enter into negotiations looking toward an exchange of fraternal delegates. If it is possible for you to bring this suggestion to the synodical committee which prepares the resolutions bearing on this subject, I should request you to transmit this communication to such committee and also speak a word in support of possible action in this direction." Dr. Bengston wrote in reply: "I have read with keen interest your kind words in regard to the Augustana Synod. Personally I can say that my relations with men of your synod have always been pleasant. . . . It is my firm conviction that the Western synods should enter into a closer fraternal relation, and I shall do everything in my power to further the move in the direction of an exchange of fraternal delegates." Nothing came of this correspondence. October 19, 1929, the *Lutheran Companion* said editorially:



"The Missouri Synod has not been able to join the other Lutheran churches in any World Convention. No other Lutheran church-body in the world is Lutheran enough to suit Missouri, it seems. But that is the German of it always. Over in Germany Lutheran theologians can't get into their heads that it is possible for any one to get theology unless he comes to Germany for it, and we have a lurking suspicion that over in St. Louis they honestly believe that one must come there if he wants honest-to-goodness orthodox Lutheranism. Now, that is the way we feel about it, though we hope we are all wrong in this. A little more recognition of other Lutherans from that source would be desirable."

The same paper has pointed to the Missouri Synod as an outstanding example of success in isolation. "We have fairly been amazed at the phenomenal success which the Missouri Synod is meeting with." Yet in 1925, Dr. Bengston wrote us (in reply to a letter of complaint when he had charged us with "seeking every occasion to put a wrong construction on the actions of other Lutheran bodies"): "I should not have put it that way. But I have felt that way, whether right or wrong. Missouri is the one Lutheran body in America that has nothing to confess, nothing to give up. All the others are more or less 'in error,' either in doctrine or practise or both. A united Lutheran Church in America is possible only when the other Lutheran bodies become as true Lutherans as Missouri. Clearly, a united Lutheran Church in America is not within human probability. Some of us value our freedom of thought and freedom of movement too highly."

But there is fear in the Augustana Synod also on the part of its conservatives that organic union may have a turn of evil results in view of the Liberalism that is gaining ground in other bodies. Rev. C. E. Cesander said in

a paper approved by his conference in 1929: "Though we may heartily desire union on a Biblical and sound doctrinal basis, we see no fidelity in a pretense of union where there is no heart-and-soul unity of doctrine. Unhappily not all who bear the name Lutheran are so in reality. So far the Augustana Synod has not resorted to evasive formulas or servile concessions to popular, less Scriptural ideas and practises of the times. And may she ever be faithful to her great and blessed charge of preaching without evading repentance and faith!" Rev. E. E. Kron, in the *Lutheran Companion* (January 6, 1934): "I will not take time in this connection to present the differences between the two wings of the Lutheran Church, the Liberals and the Conservatives and the so-called middle group, to which the Augustana Synod is said to belong. But I would merely state that the strongly liberal group is a greater danger to our Church than the overly conservative. As some one has said: 'Even those who lean too far back are still facing the heavens, where there is light; but those who lean too far forward only face the darkness of the earth.' We realize that the greatest cause for the lack of cooperation between the Lutheran synods, aside from the language question, which seems to be slowly solving itself, is just this great variety of Lutherans from the confessionally conservative to the most loudly liberal. It is comparatively easy to speak or write about Lutheran unity, but to carry it out in practise locally is seldom easy nor always advisable."

We are here confronted with a unique phenomenon. Leaders who were urged to lend a hand towards a friendly discussion of "What is keeping us apart?" voice ancient prejudices and do not voice them very courteously. And a body which is so badly divided that one party fears union lest the Conservatives win, and the other, lest the Liberals engulf everything, makes public complaint that certain

officials in other synods are keeping up the divisions of American Lutheranism!

At the Brotherhood conventions such sentiments are voiced as the following (*Lutheran Companion*, December 9, 1933): "Why can't we be in one Lutheran body? There is no difference as far as the layman is concerned. What is the trouble? It seems to me that the great trouble is in the various heads of the different synods. It is up to the pastors, the presidents of these various Lutheran bodies, to get together," etc.

The Augustana Synod has an account to square with historic Lutheranism before those in her midst who complain of the divided state of our Church in America may expect their demands to fall upon respectful ears. When a Lutheran body can be charged with a *publica doctrina* of extreme chiliastic type, no one can accuse those who refuse to acknowledge her as a sister in the faith of keeping up artificial divisions. The Lutheran Church repudiates chiliasm, as do all the historic Reformed confessions. Leading theologians and writers of the Augustana Synod entertain the most crass millennialist views. Dr. C. E. Lindberg was dean of Augustana Theological Seminary at Rock Island when he published his *Beacon Lights of Prophecy in the Latter Days*. We have in this work the constructions, to the very last details, of modern American dispensationalism (chiliasm). There are a thousand years during which Christ and His saints will "shepherdize the nations" (p. 235), preceded by the first and followed by the second resurrection. The Biblical "times" are figured as equal to 360 years (on the basis of Lev. 26, 24, where "times" certainly does not bear this interpretation), and the "time of the Gentiles" is held to be 2,520 years, corresponding to the image of Nebuchadnezzar, our present "time" corresponding to the feet of the image (p. 48, VI), the ex-

pulsion of the Turks from Palestine by the British being the preliminary judgment ushering in the close of the "Gentile age" (p. 168). Gog and Magog are identified with Russia on the familiar equations of modern chiliasm — Rosh (Russia), Meshech (Moscow), and Tubal (Tobolsk) (p. 221). The return of the Jews figures prominently. Christ's parable of the Fig-tree is held applicable to the restoration of Israel as a nation in its old home, a sign "for the hope that the restoration promised is approaching" (pp. 46. 154). The rebuilding of the Temple and the resumption of the Feast of Tabernacles may soon be expected (pp. 169. 237). The most literal interpretation of the Apocalypse imagery does not daunt this writer. "To think of a river of human and animal blood about 160 miles in length is an awful thought!" (Pp. 200. 222.) The plagues of the seventh trumpet, the transformation of the sea into clotted and putrescent blood, the darkness falling upon the throne of the Beast (either in Rome or Constantinople), the drying up of Euphrates (which will permit soldiers from Japan and China and also the lost ten tribes to reach Palestine), all are assumed to be literally descriptive (p. 202 ff.). The burial of the dead after Armageddon will require literal seven months (p. 230). One must confess to a feeling of dejection, almost of dismay, after reading this work of a Lutheran professor of theology.

Whether emanating from the theological faculty at Rock Island or from the propaganda of Reformed chiliasts, dispensationalism appears to have swept through the Augustana Synod during the past twenty years, with the result that its public teaching is uniformly of the chiliastic type. The Swedish organ *Augustana* has not given much space to these perversions of eschatology. An editorial of April 27, 1922, stresses the return of the Jews to Palestine as a fulfilment of prophecy. It even quotes the saying of

Jesus in Acts 1, 7 as assurance given to the disciples that the Jews again will be established as a kingdom in Canaan. But the *Lutheran Companion* has more than an occasional article of this type. We have before us articles by Nordquist, Erickson, Ford, and other Swedish Lutheran clergymen, who set forth the Scofield-Blackstone-Gaebelein interpretation of prophecy in its most extravagant aspects. "In the millennial kingdom the Messiah shall be King over all the earth." (*Lutheran Companion*, October 5, 1929.) "Then comes the millennium, a thousand years of universal peace, unalloyed happiness, and freedom from care and anxiety, when each one will sit undisturbed under his vine and fig-tree. No nation shall raise weapon against another nation, nor shall they learn war any more." "The future conversion of Israel is so plainly and expressly foretold in the Holy Scriptures that it may well be called an article of our Christian faith." "Oh, how this wonderful subject 'The future of the Jews' grips us, fills and thrills us! Oh, how we in our inspired vision can see a time coming very speedily when there shall be a reenactment of a scene that startled Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago, when a new triumphant entry of our glorified Lord shall be made into Jerusalem!" There is a fly in the ointment. According to the new chiliasm the Jews will come to Palestine converted to Christ as their King. As a matter of fact, Zionistic Jews show not the least inclination to become Christians. "Why they should be gathered in unbelief may appear strange. A change of heart among these people must also come about if the full content of these prophecies is to become realities. . . . May it not be therefore that this regathering and reestablishing of Jews in their homeland is but a prelude to a spiritual outpouring upon them that shall shake the entire world?"

Rev. C. W. Erickson finds a beautiful harmony between

the vision of the dry bones and the Zionist Congress of 1897. "In Ezekiel's prophecy is a picture of a valley of dry bones, which is usually taken as a picture of the Jewish nation dead to the world in exile and dispersion. The prophet sees a revival. There was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones begin to come together, bone to its bone. Is this to be taken as a picture of a national revival among the Jews? To those who are interested in curious coincidences it might be interesting to mention this one. There are exactly 206 (!) bones in the human skeleton. There were 206 delegates at the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897."

"The establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine will mean the removal of the Mosque of Omar, which to-day is a Mohammedan center of worship. This mosque is to the Jews the 'abomination of desolation in the Holy Place.' Their desire is to cleanse the sanctuary and establish the old Mosaic worship of the true God. When this has been done and Jerusalem and the Holy Land have been restored to the descendants of Abraham, the Jewish theocracy will again have a place in the sun" (October 26, 1929).

How can any one speak of an organic union between the Augustana Synod and those Lutheran bodies which regard all this chiliastic phantasmagoria as gross doctrinal error, something Christ never taught and that never entered the minds of the apostles even while they were still captives of Jewish expectations of the Messianic kingdom? As for the Missouri Synod, by amalgamating with the Swedish Lutherans, we should be importing into that body more than 3,000 pastors and congregations that would within six months be at war with their brethren regarding the teaching of the Second Advent. The result would not be church peace, but turmoil.

Accordingly, in the interest of an organic union of

Lutherans that would be a true reestablishment of unity, we should have to ask Swedish Lutherans first of all to sweep out the chiliastic leaven from their minds. Next, we would ask them to come to a perfect agreement among themselves on the doctrine of Biblical inspiration. This thought suggests itself after reading a book entitled *What Is Lutheranism? A Symposium in Interpretation*, edited by Vergilius Ferm, who holds a chair in the (Presbyterian) Wooster College, but is a member of the Augustana Synod clergy. In this book, Professor Ferm says: "The doctrine of the complete inerrancy of the Bible, upon which historic Lutheranism has built up a system of orthodoxy, can hardly, without a loss of intellectual integrity and vitality, be to-day maintained in the light of the historical method of understanding the Scriptures." Later, in replying to a criticism of his book, he said: "I hold that the Bible, though it is a product of human forces, need not be merely human; I specifically said that it has valid spiritual content." (*Lutheran Companion*, January 17, 1931).<sup>8)</sup>

Reviewing Dr. Lenski's *Commentary on Matthew*, a reviewer in the same paper asks: "Does Dr. Lenski mean to imply that the fact of inspiration (which Lu-

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8) Prof. George M. Stephenson (of Minnesota University) is a parishioner of Dr. C. A. Wendell, who contributed a chapter to Dr. Ferm's book. He reviewed it in the *Lutheran Companion* (June 21, 1930) and especially praised Dr. Ferm and Dr. Wendell for their contributions to the book. His judgment was that Ferm's and Wendell's positions are essentially the same. Samuel Miller, in the *Bible Banner*, wrote: "I cannot help but wonder if Wendell appreciates being thus linked up with Ferm in the latter's Liberalism." And Dr. L. S. Keyser, in the *Bible Champion*, said concerning Ferm and Wendell that they "display a good many modernistic leanings." I also find the following paragraph in the review: "We do not believe that men like Dr. Wendell, who in this very book scoffs at the doctrine of plenary inspiration and ridicules people who believe the Bible 'from cover to cover,' can rightfully lay claim to being *bona-fide* Lutherans. One cannot help wondering anyway how a man can be a Lutheran and a rationalist at the same time." Very good.

therans accept) must be identified with the theory of verbal inspiration (a theory which is by no means unanimously accepted by consistent Lutherans)? The Lutheran Church has no official theory of inspiration." (*Lutheran Companion*, December 16, 1933.) The writer is Prof. H. W. Johnson of Augustana Seminary. Rev. C. G. Erickson, in the same paper, voices his agreement with Dr. C. M. Jacobs's inaugural address, which made a distinction between the Bible and the Word of God (May 21, 1927). His comment is: "Many of his statements would no doubt have disturbed some men in the Augustana Synod, but I am quite sure Luther himself would have agreed to what President Jacobs said." We agree with the first half of this sentence. But does not this admission of disunion on the question of inspiration suggest the duty of Swedish Lutherans first to reach an agreement on this doctrine before they ask other Lutherans to join them? We have, on the one hand, statements such as those quoted; also that of the editor of the *Lutheran Companion* himself, who in 1929 said that the writers of the Bible "saw nature from the viewpoint of their day"; and of Dr. S. G. Haegg-lund, who says "that Paul in the matter of marriage and of women and John in his second epistle and in Revelation fall short of Christ's standard" (*The Bible Banner*, 1927?); and, on the other hand, that majority of Swedish Lutherans who, we believe, still cling to the belief that the Bible is in all its parts the inerrant Word of God.

The *intuitu-fidei* doctrine regarding election has the official approval of the Swedish Synod. Its organ, the *Lutheran Companion*, December 16, 1933, rejected the doctrine that God "has elected some unto faith and salvation" and instead affirmed "that God predestines unto salvation those who, He foreknows, will believe in Jesus." In 1929 the clergy of the Minnesota District of the Augus-



tana Synod accepted a paper from which we quote the following: "Who of our Augustana people would want to unite with the Missouri Synod with its friendly attitude to the saloon element? Not one, I hope. Nor could we swallow their lean predestinarianism, which Calvinism has been choking on these many years. In our preaching we begin with Christ as our Foundation. The Missourians begin at the top and muddle their little brains with God's election. . . . And if we merge with the Missourians, we will most certainly break our neck; and then, what good are we? . . . In view of these and other reasons the Augustana Synod cannot merge with the Missourians." (*Lutheran Companion*, June 29, 1929.) The paper was written as an argument against union with other Lutheran bodies. Whatever we may think of its position on election, its logic regarding church union is perfect.

Rev. N. O. Montan, writing in the *Lutheran Companion*, rejects evolutionism because its claims are "nothing else than philosophical assumptions and suppositions, unwarrantable claims and make-believes." His brother in the faith, Dr. C. A. Wendell, on the other hand, addresses the M. U. campus declaring that he had made no personal investigation of the facts of evolution; "however," he declared, "since scientists who have spent years investigating various single branches of science all agree that the theory of evolution explains more natural phenomena than any other theory, I am inclined to believe them. But as soon as a theory can be found which will explain more facts than the theory of evolution, I would not hesitate to drop the theory of evolution as I would a hot potato." (*Minnesota Daily*, January 26, 1927.) Until Rev. Montan and Dr. Wendell have composed their differences on evolutionism, we would be joining not both, but one or the other by merging with the Augustana Synod. And this would

mean an upheaval where now peace reigns on the agreement to disagree regarding evolutionism.

The Reformed infection is noticeable in the official attitude on the Sabbath ("In the Old Dispensation the seventh day belonged absolutely to Him. In the New Dispensation He expressly calls it the Lord's Day," *Lutheran Companion*, April 4, 1925) and on the prohibition issue. During the 18th-Amendment campaign Swedish Lutherans were urged by their church-papers to vote for prohibition, and entire district synods passed resolutions in the same direction.

There is considerable halting between two opinions on the lodge question. More than twenty years ago, in their Jamestown, N. Y., convention, the Augustana Synod, by a vote of 81 to 71, voted in favor of keeping in the constitution the clause providing that no member "of the Masonic Order or other secret or atheistic society" should be entitled to membership in the Church. Even more recently (1924) we hear such testimony as this: "The oath-bound lodge with its elaborate part-pagan, part-Christian and part who-knows-what religion and rituals is antichristian root and branch." But the official voice has long ago been altogether neutral. The *Lutheran Companion*, June 5, 1915, said editorially that the Church cannot discipline lodge men. "The Church may possibly do well not to sit as a judge of the conscience of the individual. It must speak its mind on questions that pertain to the eternal welfare of the people; but it possibly does best in leaving it to the conscience of the individual to decide whether he can, before his God and as a Christian, belong to a secret order with its oaths and its obligations that take preference to everything else. But farther than that the Church cannot go and be true to its Christ and God." In the same editorial, however, the writer refers to the corner-stone laying of a General Council church in Kansas City with Masonic

ceremonies and asks: "How can a large Lutheran synod that tolerates such acts as the one referred to ever hope to see the desire realized of a union between the general Lutheran bodies in America? But looseness in faith ever goes with looseness in practise." April 4, 1925, the same paper says without a word of disapproval: "To us it seems strange that so many of our members do not read our church-papers. Many of these members belong to fraternal organizations, and be assured that with but few exceptions they subscribe for, and read, the organ of their fraternity. It is not a question of money when it comes to the fraternal papers and magazines, but when [they are] asked to subscribe for one of our church-papers, we so often receive the reply, 'I really can't afford it.'"

In general it may be said that the bars against secret orders are down in the Augustana Synod.

The relations of the Augustana Synod to the state church of Sweden are cordial. Church-fellowship is practised with visitors from Sweden, even though they represent so modernistic a position as the late Archbishop Soederblom. It is freely admitted that the Church of Sweden tolerates Modernism and has tolerated it for years. Rev. A. Bergin writes in *Augustana* that in the seminary of Sweden teachers have been installed who deny the Confessions of the Church. "It appears that we must actually take a stand against the mother Church." Dr. Abrahamson refers to Dr. Lindsy as a translator of one of Fosdick's destructive books. Professor Stephenson writes: "I spent a year in Sweden and attended many services in the Established Church. Never once did I hear the doctrine of the atonement preached; but I was told that, if the atonement is ever mentioned, it is usually the doctrine of Waldenstroem." Dr. Bostroem asserts that "the younger clergy, while using the old terminology in their sermons, are kept

busy explaining to the inquirer that Christ only revealed God and cannot be said to be God. He is God's son as you and I are the children of God, but in a higher degree. He died, not as a propitiation for the sins of men, but simply exemplifying his teachings in the Sermon on the Mount even unto death." Dr. Abrahamson represented the Augustana Synod officially at the inauguration of Archbishop Soederblom. Protests were few. Until Soederblom turns a "simple Biblical confessor," wrote Professor Hult in the *Lutheran* in 1914, "the confessional Lutheran Church of America finds itself, at the risk of its conscience-peace, forced to keep separate from all entanglements. 'Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr',—all the glory and the genius of this world dare not entice us by word or deed to betray the unsullied shield of American Lutheran confessionalism." And Rev. Norelius, the venerable ex-president of the Augustana Synod, wrote at the same time in the *Lutheran Companion*: "The main question with me is not Soederblom and his theological standpoint, but the relation of the Augustana Synod to the state church of Sweden. . . . I am severely opposed to all entangling alliances with the state church of Sweden." These voices have not been heeded.

In 1930 President Brandelle accepted, against the advice of such conservatives as Rev. Bersell, the invitation extended to him to attend a meeting of Scandinavian bishops in Sweden. Soederblom sent him an episcopal cross, "delivered by the archbishop and bishops of Sweden to our Swedish-American brother, the episcopal servant of the Swedish Church in America." There was a good deal of protest, but it was overcome in 1934 when the synod voted its president permission to wear the episcopal cross. Action on the bishop's cross followed a decision by the synod to celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary next year

at Rock Island, Ill., and to invite representatives of the Church of Sweden. One of the professors of Augustana Theological Seminary wrote us April 15, 1926: "We are fully aware of the fact that some of our leading men are friends and followers of the Archbishop of Sweden; but the rank and file of our synod is yet safe and sound." As a matter of fact, indifference to doctrine has become so general that there are no strong convictions one way or the other.

When the Rt. Rev. Hjalmar Danell, bishop of the diocese of Skara, and Lady Danell, who were here as the special emissaries of the Church of Sweden and representatives of the Swedish government, visited the United States in 1929, they were received on a fraternal basis by the Minnesota Conference (District) of the Augustana Synod and by many other gatherings. Bishop Danell, in his dealings with native Christians in India after the war, had proved himself a unionist not above sacrificing the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper and other fundamentals.

Dr. Adolph Hult, in an article intended for the *Lutheran Witness* in 1922 (but never published), speaks of conditions within the Swedish Synod as follows: —

"When I read, with grateful, though burdened heart, Rev. Martin Sommer's article in the *Witness*, styled "In What are They Interested?" which referred to a *Lutheran Companion* editorial on the lack of theological interest in our Augustana Synod, I felt 'wounded in the house of my friends.' But that expression is to be taken in an applied sense. Since the days of Dr. O. Olsson, late president of Augustana College and Seminary (died 1900), there have not to my knowledge sounded forth such words of repentance to the ministry of my synod as that article. I wish it were read by every pastor in our body. The lack of theological interest, of which the *Companion* editorial complained, is indeed finally a danger symptom of the first order.

"Were not the free word shackled in our midst, even when

we champion confessional fidelity over against certain types, I might not have occasion to send these lines to the *Witness*. But I hold the conviction that, when the *Witness* printed Rev. Sommer's deep and probing words, it intended such a wound in the house of friends as might find healing by the Balsam of Gilead, which is so amply dispensed in the Synodical Conference.

"There are reasons why the theological interest has fallen in Augustana. Above all, deep inner decay, no doubt, as the article indicates. Our Synod's pietism has not matured in a rich Bible spirit. It has gradually run too often into practicalism. We lack all too much such leadership as would center on the Word and the doctrine. We formerly had it in abundance. We have for twenty years and more been engaged in the race for bigness. The irony of it, that a strange decrease has during that same period steadily come on, as it is bound to do. For when the Church of Christ makes bigness in this world an objective, God suffers her diminution to set in. That may serve all Lutherans as a warning. Rev. Sommer's article was in that respect also a model in that it turned to home with the call to repentance when writing of conditions in another Lutheran body.

Call  
to  
Bigness

"Personally I hold that our Synod's coquetry (since 1914) with the liberal head of Sweden's Church has delivered a body blow to synodical interest in confessional theology which it will take a generation or more to overcome. Until my voice was stifled by crude ecclesiastical force, I bore witness to that fact. It cannot be possible both to have Lutheran confessional interest and at the same time eulogize, hold up to church gaze, invite, defend, brilliant personalities who have gone far on in the broadest Liberalism, albeit so skilfully camouflaged by luscious literary style, vagueness of expression, and an undeniable personal and religious charm as to make it difficult for the unwary to discover the deep ways of error therein. I should say more on this topic, which I hold to be a historical tragedy for our Church; but God Himself will attend to this sad and wrecking coquetry with error. With the church censorship as perfect as that of Russia, there is no exit but to abide the vast judgments of God, who will not fail to speak in His own time and vindicate the truth of His Word.

"Other reasons could be mentioned, tendencies operative not only in Augustana, but also in perhaps all other synods of our American Lutheran Church; but I refrain.

"It was the chief purpose of this article to express gratitude to the writer of that ringing repentance article. I am in Christ persuaded that not the so often derisively styled 'Missouri' animosity dictated it, but deep and treasurable Christian love. And while it is perhaps a new thing to write words like those mentioned yet in the far future there may come a day when they will be remembered with truly penitent gratitude.

"Meanwhile 'God's Word and doctrine pure'—be it ever the great and grand preoccupation of our American Lutheran Church. When that interest once fails, if it does, then the Church of Luther will have a successor. God spare us that! God keep us at His Word in humble faithfulness! Rock Island, Ill., June, 1922."

Unionistic practises have become the order of the day. Relations of fellowship, expressed by participation in union services, have been established with the Reformed sects. These instances are so common that it seems unnecessary to quote individual cases. However, since nothing else will bring the discussion of church union down to concrete terms of what in our opinion must be corrected in order that harmony may be established, a few typical cases are here appended: At Rock Island and Moline pastors of the Augustana Synod are members of the Ministerial Alliance, a unionistic organization. Congregational pastors in Moline belong to this alliance. At the corner-stone laying of the Denkmann Memorial Library a Presbyterian pastor was the speaker. At the Reformation Festival at the Augustana College (1917) the United Presbyterian Rev. Vance spoke the prayer. Dr. Bostrom served a Presbyterian congregation during a vacancy. He was a member of the faculty of Augustana College. The *Pecatonica* (Ill.) *News* of January 15, 1926, reported the funeral of a Mason conducted at the Augustana Synod church, with an Augustana student officiating, assisted by a Methodist pastor, Rev. J. M. Beck. Rev. Schwartz writes in the same connection that the former pastor had had his pulpit occu-

ried by a Congregationalist, with the liturgy performed by a Methodist, and that he, in turn, took his congregation to the Congregational church and occupied its pulpit. At Fort Dodge, Iowa, at a Maundy Thursday union service some years ago, President Andreen of Augustana College delivered a sermon, while Rev. W. W. Pickett, pastor of the First Congregational Church, presided and Dr. Karl W. G. Hiller of the Epworth Methodist Church led in prayer. The *Lutheran Companion* of November 3, 1923, under the heading "Closer Cooperation between Protestant Churches," reported words of greeting from Rev. O. N. Olson to the M. E. Conference at Sioux City, which included the following: "It affords me much pleasure to extend to your conference the fraternal greetings of our Ministerial Association. . . . Times were when greetings of this sort would have seemed much out of place. . . . There have been times of religious bigotry and intolerance. . . . Happily these times are past. . . . We can all labor for a better understanding, for more generous recognition and appreciation, for a broader sympathy and courtesy, for a larger measure of cooperation in our common tasks and problems." At Rankin, Ill., the Presbyterian and Methodist churches joined with the Augustana church in the Sunday evening services in honor of the Rev. E. U. Youngdahl, October, 1929. At Iron Mountain, Mich., the Augustana Pastor G. A. Danielson, in March, 1930, urged his congregation to attend a service at a Presbyterian church. At Geneseo, Ill., it was announced November 26, 1930: "Union thanksgiving services will be held at 9.30 to-morrow morning in the Methodist church. The Rev. G. E. Burton, pastor of the First Lutheran Church, will speak. Prayer by Rev. W. E. Hogg. Scripture-lesson by Rev. Jeffrey D. Hoy. Benediction by Rev. G. H. Wykle." (Rev. Hogg is Presbyterian; Rev.

Hoy, Congregationalist; Rev. Burton, Augustana Synod; Rev. Wykle, Reformed Church.) At another thanksgiving service, held in Boston, a Jewish Rabbi was the speaker, and Unitarian preachers also were participants. Rev. Haegg-lund of the Augustana Synod pronounced the benediction. At La Grange, Ill., at the dedication of the church of the Augustana Synod, the Presbyterian pastor preached the sermon, and the Baptist pastor congratulated officially. The Augustana Synod pastor is taking part also in union services. At East Moline fellowship evangelistic meetings were held. Speakers were Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist ministers, and Rev. Aden of the Augustana Synod. At Morrison, Ill., a union service was held on Thanksgiving Day, 1930. Rev. Wimmer, Baptist minister, preached the sermon in the Augustana church. At the funeral of Miss Brandt, Rev. Laack (Augustana Synod) and Rev. Martin (Congregationalist) officiated. Rev. Martin is also officiating together with a Rabbi. In dedicating a tabernacle at Davenport, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, a Baptist, a Congregationalist, an Episcopalian, and a U. L. C. pastor took part. An Augustana pastor, Rev. A. Chindblom, offered the invocation.

Dr. Joshua Oden made a speech at the dedication of the Hall of Religion at A Century of Progress Exhibition, 1933. I quote from that speech as follows: —

“As chairman of the Committee on Exhibits it has been a keen pleasure to watch the spirit of good will actuating the exhibitors. Each exhibitor representing some form of religion does not attempt to tell you that his religion is better than the others nor that it is the only one, but rather here is an attempt to portray by word, picture, statue, and symbolism the progress which has been made during the past century to give to the world such God-emanating ideals as each has been led to see them. Here Jew and Gentile, Liberal and Conservative, have met under one roof to proclaim the truth of the beautiful message which was spoken by the Master of old when He said, ‘I am come



that ye may have life, and have it more abundantly.'” The *Bond*, the official organ of the Lutheran Brotherhood Life Insurance, said about this speech: “It gave us real joy to note that our Lutheran representative, Dr. Joshua Oden, whose address is published in this issue of the *Bond*, gave public recognition on this occasion to the primacy of the Christ”—!

Dr. M. N. Lundquist of Gustavus Adolphus College in the *Lutheran Companion* refers to the World’s Congress of Religions in Chicago, where Mohammedans, Hindus, Shintoists, and other heathen worshiped with American infidels. He writes: “There were, from all the ends of the earth, flowing yellow robes, turbaned garbs, and faiths of many kinds; there they all met in that great Congress of Religions. But it was impressive and touching to see them arise and altogether repeat the prayer which Christ taught His disciples in Galilee.” When the (Catholic) St. Peter’s Church in St. Paul celebrated its diamond jubilee, there appeared the following congratulation in the jubilee booklet: “Gustavus Adolphus College extends cordial greetings and congratulations to St. Peter’s Catholic Church on the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding, recognizing and appreciating the work it has done during these many years in the building up of the moral and spiritual life of our city and community. O. J. Johnson, President.” At a banquet, Dr. O. J. Johnson voiced a welcome to Archbishop Murray from Gustavus Adolphus College. He paid a tribute to the “sacrifice and courage, hope and unselfish devotion, of the pastors and members of St. Peter’s parish to this community” and concluded by addressing the archbishop thus: “I congratulate you upon the parish and diocese that have been given you and upon the great opportunities that it unfolds to you.”

Now, will the reader help us solve this problem? Assuming that we had no scruples at all in going into organic union with Augustana *as is*, how could it be man-

aged practically without causing more strife than the Swedes are now having among themselves? They now have a pretty strong organization, which has a "censorship as tight as that of Russia" (Dr. Hult); could it stand the strain if Missouri came in with some 3,000 pastors that to a man detest Modernism, chiliasm, sectarianism, state-churchism? No "censorship" — we warrant you that — could keep down this crowd of Missourians, and the upset in synodical offices, theological professorships, and editorships would be startling to behold. We must permit the Swedish Lutherans to settle these questions themselves, and settle them right, before we can join them in organic or fraternal union. As for discussions and conferences, we are ready now as we were in 1918, when they missed their chance. And there was less to settle then.

### 3. THE NORWEGIAN LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA.

This church-body is a merger of the Synod of the Norwegian Ev. Luth. Church of America, the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, and Hauge's Norwegian Ev. Luth. Synod. The union of these bodies was initiated by the adoption of the Madison Agreement (*Opgjoer*) in 1912 and was consummated at a joint meeting of the three bodies June 9, 1917.

The Madison Agreement consists of theses for the settlement (*Opgjoer*) of the differences which had existed since 1880 among the Norwegian Lutherans in the doctrines of election (predestination) and conversion. For some time<sup>9)</sup> demands had been uttered in the church-papers, especially of the United Church, that both parties to the controversy, "on the basis of agreeing to differ" (*Lutheraneren*, 1911, p. 1320), unite into one body. "None

9) The documentary history of the Madison Theses is the subject of an article in the *Lutheran Witness*, 1915, p. 402 ff.

will then be able to say that they have won, none will have lost; the whole doctrinal controversy will appear to have been more or less a misunderstanding, due to looking through colored spectacles." (*Ibid.*, pp. 1320. 1321.)

The Madison Agreement is a unionistic document, inasmuch as it gave both sides in the controversy on conversion and election an opportunity to say: "That is what we teach," yet without having in any point changed their former doctrinal stand. Certain sentences in this document assert that the eternal decree of election unto faith and everlasting life is a cause of our salvation. ("First Form.") This is the Scriptural doctrine. Other sentences convey the doctrine that God has chosen certain men to be finally saved because He foresaw that they would accept the Gospel and remain steadfast in faith. ("Second Form.") For this doctrine there is no ground in Scripture. Scripture teaches that faith is a result, not a cause, of our election unto everlasting life. However, both these doctrines are found in the Madison Agreement. It specifically coordinates (places on one level) both these doctrines, though only one is grounded in Scripture. Moreover, this unionistic arrangement came in response to a demand which had been voiced in the United Church that the Norwegian Synod should accept the "second form" of the doctrine of election and the United Church the "first form," and unreservedly, *uforbeholdent*, declare that no new theses on election are required. (Editorial, *Lutheraneren*, 1910, p. 880 f.) Exactly this was done by the new committee on union. Thesis I of the Madison Agreement states that both bodies unreservedly, *uforbeholdent* (the very word is used), accept the doctrine in both forms, and Thesis II declares that no new theses on the doctrine of election are required.

Synergism is actually rejected by the Madison Agree-

ment in the chief forms in which it has appeared historically. However, Thesis IV contradicts this by speaking of "man's feeling of responsibility over against the acceptance or rejection of grace." This expression is based on the notion that man occupies the same position with regard to the *acceptance and* rejection of grace, while in reality the position is an altogether different one in each case. The rejection of grace is solely and alone an act of man, while the acceptance of grace is solely and alone an operation of God. A group of the old Norwegian Synod recognized the unionistic nature of this agreement, and the error contained under the phrase which ascribes to man a "feeling of responsibility over against the acceptance or rejection of grace" and has since maintained an independent existence, continuing the old Norwegian Synod.

A year after the Madison Agreement was adopted, Rev. S. Gunderson, one of its authors, said: "The United Church has not changed one tittle of its doctrine, neither has the synod; the *Opgjoer* is a compromise." And Dr. Boe, ten years after the union was accomplished, said: "The union was consummated not because any of the three synods had changed their views on theological questions or had lost respect for the tendencies which they represented, but simply because our common Christian faith and our common blood compelled it."

The Synodical Conference, at its convention in 1912, voiced its disagreement with the Madison Agreement. A letter was addressed to the Norwegian Synod asking that the following changes be made: "a) to eliminate from Theses 1—3 of the *Opgjoer* the coordination of the so-called first and second form of doctrine, because only the first form<sup>10)</sup> represents the truth of the Scriptures and of

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10) Election unto faith.

the Confessions, while the second form<sup>11)</sup> is not founded in God's Word and the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, and hence is not entitled to such recognition in the Church. b) Inasmuch as the present state of affairs in our American Lutheran Church demands a proper antithesis to synergistic doctrine, we pray you to take steps to bring about a rejection of the teaching that man's conduct, in particular his omission of the so-called wilful resistance, either by his natural powers or by power conferred by divine grace, is the reason by which we may explain why some are converted and elected rather than others, as our opponents in the American Lutheran Church teach." (*Synodical Conference Report*, 1912, p. 24.) Strong efforts were made by a committee of the Synodical Conference to bring its testimony before the Norwegian Synod, but in vain. Since 1917 a great majority of the Norwegian Synod has been merged in the Norwegian Lutheran Church. Restoration of fellowship relations depends, for one thing, on *the revision of the basis of union, the Madison Agreement*, in order to bring it into harmony with the Lutheran Confessions.

The third body in the union was the old Hauge's Synod. To the present day many pastors and congregations of the Haugean type have retained their revivalistic spirit. (See *Concordia Theological Monthly*, III, p. 241 ff.) They accuse other Norwegians united with them of being of the High Church and ritualistic type and of representing a "program Christianity." Lay evangelists are still visiting the congregations to conduct revivals. From the foreign field (China) scenes are reported that represent the Pentecostal or Holy Roller type of conversion rather than the Lutheran. "Some people have stated that they will not return to their homes before they have the assurance of

11) Election in view of faith.

their salvation." "Violent scenes which sometimes accompany such meetings have been avoided as far as possible. At the end of one meeting one husky man ran inside the altar-rail and, tearing open his clothes, began to beat his breast. During prayer one young boy began to strike his own face and mouth. At other times people begin to moan and often fall to the floor. In many cases it may take a long time before comfort and peace are found." (Quoted in *Northwestern Lutheran*, 1934, p. 245.)

As in the Augustana Synod, but by no means to the same extent, the chiliasm of the Scofield Bible has made its converts. *Lutheraneren* of July 10, 1918 contained a detailed presentation of the new millennialism, the so-called Dispensational teaching. We read: "Will there be two kinds of resurrection or only one? The Bible says two, the resurrection of the just and the general resurrection of the dead. But what is meant by the first resurrection and the thousand-year reign? We shall admit that the answer is difficult. I am myself far from being clear on details, and it is difficult to depart from the ancient opinion which we have imbibed from childhood days. But there is much that is meaningless in the old interpretation, and we may well consider whether it is not our Christian duty to depart from it. I have lately read a book by Wm. E. Blackstone," — one of the leaders of the Dispensational heresy, — "a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, entitled *Jesus is Coming*, a book from which all will derive benefit." Then follows a summary of Blackstone's teachings, concerning which the writer has some doubts while he whole-heartedly embraces chiliasm in its traditional form. "Let us endeavor to find greater and greater clearness concerning the doctrine about the millennium and not leave it only to the sects." The Dispensationalist interpretation of prophecies regarding the Latter

Days characterizes more recent articles. For example (*Lutheran Herald*, 1931, p. 1071 ff.): "Some may ask the question, Who shall go through this tribulation? First of all the Jews, partially restored to their own land, where they will suffer for their unbelief. Antichrist will break his league with them in the middle of the week of tribulation and cause them to worship his image, which they will not do. Therefore he centers his wrath upon them. Yet they will have 144,000 sealed Jews who are God's servants bearing witness unto them. God does not leave Himself without a witness even then. Later they will have the two witnesses spoken of in Rev. 2." Rev. Jersing Thompson of the N. L. C. in 1935 published a book, *The Key to Revelation*, which sets forth the chiliastic scheme, with the wars of Antichrist, rapture of the Church, millennium, and all. The book is recommended by the reviewer in *Lutheran Herald*, the official organ.

More recently the social gospel is finding spokesmen. Essays and articles are published by men of prominence which call for the establishment of "a more Christian social order," in which "the ideal of God's kingdom" will be realized (quotations in the *Lutheran Sentinel*, organ of the Norwegian Synod, 1934).

The infiltration of modernistic views in the conception of Biblical inspiration is clearly perceived in Dr. Edward Hegland's booklet *The Uniqueness of the Bible* (Augsburg Publishing House, 1934). The chapter on inspiration does not deny that the Bible is uniquely inspired. But in the further discussion the author not only uses phrases that are characteristic of Modernism (the writers of the Biblical books were not "God's secretaries to whom God dictated"; "the greater part of the Bible is not given as a dictation from God"; "in the Bible there is something divine, and there is also something human"); he identifies

the theory of verbal inspiration with such deductions as "that all the Scriptures are of equal importance and contain the divine truth in full; that God is the direct Author of the Scriptures; that the writers are God's secretaries, and even when they recorded historical accounts or narrated what they had heard or seen, their thoughts and words were directly given by the Holy Spirit, so that what they wrote was absolutely faultless and reliable." Hegland comes to the conclusion: "It seems more proper to speak of inspired writers than to speak of inspired books of the Bible." In all this we find so many ambiguities, misrepresentations, false deductions, and denials that we cannot recognize in this treatment of inspiration the doctrine which we hold as one with which the Church will stand or fall, the doctrine of verbal inspiration, by which we mean indeed the belief that the authors of the canon were directed infallibly by the Holy Spirit to use those very words which He wanted them to use.

We believe that the ministers of the N. L. C. as a whole do not share these uncertainties regarding inspiration. Similarly regarding chiliasm there is a conflict within the Norwegian body. *Lutheraneren* prints a chiliastic article by Rev. Shefveld, but a protest appears, signed by three ministers, formerly members of the Norwegian Synod. "We have not expected," say these protestants, "that one of our Lutheran preachers would ever deliver a sermon in which the crassest chiliasm is upheld, and that with Reformed authority as proof." Reference is then made by them to our *Prophecy and the War* as a statement of the Lutheran view, and the editor of *Lutheraneren* is reminded of his duty to edit a Lutheran church-paper for Lutherans. But the editors in rejoinder declare that they found nothing contrary to the Scriptures and our Lutheran Confessions in Rev. Shefveld's sermon;

the Lutheran Church cannot be expected to remain satisfied to live on what it has inherited from an earlier age, but should "seek to gain more light."

On the lodge question, sentiment is hopelessly divided. Articles have appeared in the *Theological Forum*, in *Lutheraneren*, and in the *Lutheran Herald* which take the Scriptural stand over against unionistic or idolatrous secret orders. Lectures are delivered at the theological seminary against lodges. On the other hand, the lax spirit of the old United Norwegian Church has not been curbed by this testimony. There is more than toleration of the lodge. Lodge men are invited to join, and pastors officiate at funerals jointly with the secret orders.

Of the unionism practised by the Norwegian Synod with other *Lutheran* bodies another chapter will speak. What is even more regrettable is the general decline of the confessional spirit, which is noticed in the increasing frequency of unionism with the Reformed sects. But if regrettable, unscriptural views of fellowship were embedded in the very nature of the Norwegian union. You cannot unite on a compromise platform without creating a psychology which prepares the ground for more compromises. And it is not to be overlooked that one of the factors of the union, the Hauge Synod, like all pietistic bodies, had from its beginning a strong tendency towards unionism. The Union Committee tried to build a dam against this influence through Section 3 of the Madison Agreement. It reads: "We pledge each other in all sincerity to have no churchly collaboration with the Reformed or with others who do not share the faith and confession of our body." But note well now the fate of this article. A minority within the Hauge Synod took exception to this article and would not be pacified unless their "understanding" of it received recognition. Their "understanding," which was



accepted by the Hauge convention of 1916, reads: "We do not consider it to be collaboration or a mixing of religions if, upon occasion, we take part in . . . burials, . . . graduations, in which also ministers of other denominations appear. And we do not consider this paragraph to deny the right of taking part in movements of religious type which concern the entire Christian Church, as, General Missionary Conferences, Student Volunteer Movement, Student Federation, and Laymen's Missionary Movement." When everything was set for the Norwegian merger, at the eleventh hour, on June 8, 1917, a representative from the Hauge convention appeared before the synodical convention requesting permission to present a petition from the Hauge's Union Committee. He was given the floor, and the above "understanding" was read. A lively, but short discussion ensued. The Hauge representative stated that approving the petition did not involve subscribing to the "understanding," but merely meant that those who thus interpreted the paragraph in question be recognized as brethren in faith. The petition was granted; but the right to testify against such practises as enumerated in the "understanding" was reserved. (See *Beretning*, 17, p. 166.) The reservation of "right to testify against such practise" — what is that but an admission of guilt and an effort to appease a disturbed conscience? Deliberately and by resolution the bars were let down for unionism. Little wonder therefore that unionism is rife in the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America to-day.

Not that witness-bearing is dead. Rev. O. Turmo writes in the *Lutheran Herald*: "Since the injunction of Scripture against fraternizing with those who pervert the doctrine of God's Word is based on the sinfulness of such perversion, the injunction must apply to brotherly fellowship with all who commit that sin by teaching what you know is false

and wrong; for by fraternizing with them in unionistic practises, you become a partaker with them in the sins of teaching false doctrine which they commit." Plain enough. And more recently the same paper said editorially: "It is the writer's firm conviction that Lutherans should not participate in union services with the Reformed churches. Participation is unionism. And unionism leads to confusion as well as loss of firm convictions. Unionism proceeds on the false premise that there are some things in our Christian faith that do not matter. And such a premise inevitably leads to Liberalism and Modernism. . . . Since Jesus and His apostles on so many occasions have warned against false doctrine and against those who teach false doctrine, it would be inconsistent for us who claim the divine Word as our only authoritative rule of faith and conduct to hold divine services together with such as confess and preach false doctrine." (July 31, 1934.) *Luthera-neren* said January 13, 1932, regarding attendance upon interdenominational fellowship meetings: "Our body intends to preserve the heritage of the fathers. It has a strong front against unionism such as this and such as, if it is permitted to develop, will in a little while prepare a fine road for rationalism." I am also informed that, "where there are public statements about unionism in our synod, in every case it is carefully gone into, and as far as God gives us the wisdom and insight, we try to carry out that which is right both in principle and in practise" (letter from President Aasgaard to the writer). But the record of unionism in the Norwegian Church, open and unabashed, is growing apace. In Minneapolis the pastor of the largest church, Rev. J. A. O. Stub, is on the Board of Directors of the Church Federation. This federation has appointed Albert G. Minda, Rabbi of Temple Israel Synagog, teacher in its Community Training-school for

Sunday-school Teachers. Also in other cities, ministers of the Norwegian Lutheran Church are members of ministerial associations. In every case this involves joint prayer and work. On Thanksgiving Day a Student Volunteer Convention is attended by representatives (also the 1920 convention, of which the *Christian Workers' Magazine*, the organ of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, said: "Many a loyal heart was pained by utterances entirely foreign to the New Testament"). When Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis was dedicated in 1928, speakers from the U. L. C., the Augustana Synod, a United Danish minister, and a Finnish Lutheran clergyman were represented on the program, also the secretary of the Minneapolis Church Federation; an Episcopal choir sang, and the singing was led by the organist of Plymouth Congregational Church. The fraternizing with the Norwegian state church — thoroughly impregnated with Modernism — belongs into the same category. There is a lengthening record of funerals conducted jointly with Reformed ministers, of services held jointly with the Salvation Army and in one case with a Mormon (1931 at Dillon, Mont.). Aside from the general offense thus given, it will happen that an Episcopalian rector, speaking in a Lutheran church, is heard to say: "Grotesque and hideous — that God's honor had to be vindicated; and so Jesus became our Substitute as an atonement for sin, and if we just accept His substitution, we, in spite of our sins, go scot-free." The Lutheran doctrine of redemption held up to execration in a Lutheran church!

Aside from the fundamental disagreement which still exists between the old anti-Missourians and the "synod" Lutherans regarding the doctrines of predestination and conversion and aside from the deep gulf which separates the Haugeans from the other churches of the Norwegian

body, there is accordingly a most serious conflict in the ranks of the Norwegian Lutheran Church regarding the relation of a Lutheran preacher to the Reformed clergy and of Lutheran Christians to the Reformed Church element. Somehow this matter, too, must be settled before we could live under the same roof with the Norwegian Lutheran Church and feel at home.

The present writer has reason to feel most keenly the sorrow of separation. He was ordained in the Norwegian Lutheran Synod. He was editor of the official organ, the *Lutheran Herald*, from 1907 to 1913,<sup>12)</sup> and counts among the Norwegian clergy and laity some of his dearest friends. He regards the separation of 1917 as the tragedy of his life. What he wrote to one of his old friends in 1927 holds good to-day: "Our Synod is not in fellowship with the Norwegian Lutheran Church — a condition which I shall never cease to regret until we can again shake hands as brothers." And to one of the officials who had taken umbrage at a statement in the *Lutheran Witness*: "To write 'against' Norwegian Lutherans is to me like cutting into my own flesh. One does not do that lightly. There is so much about your people that I love, there are so many ministers whom I admire, that it is very painful to me to note what appears a weakening, in deference to the *Zeitgeist*, of the confessional consciousness"; and when President Aasgaard took office: "Permit me to extend to you, as you are about to assume the great duties of the presidency of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, my sincere good wishes. It is regrettable beyond words that a rift should have appeared between the Synodical Conference and the Norwegian Lutherans. Will you not count upon me for such help as I can render in order to help heal the wounds of

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12) While pastor and missionary of the Missouri Synod in Chicago.

1880 and 1912? And may God give you wisdom and strength to guide the ship of your Church in soundly Lutheran paths!"

In a letter to the present writer Rev. R. A. Ofstedal (N. L. C.) records what he calls "a most encouraging trend" among pastors and people of the Norwegian Lutheran Church. He lectured at the theological seminary and says: "I found among these students a very strong and vital interest in the lodge question, and the determination was expressed by many of them to take a stand on this issue when they came out into the ministry. I have also found a number of pastors of late coming out in their sermons on the lodge question. More and more there seems to be a general awakening of interest and zeal. I am glad to say that I have truly found the situation changing for the better in this respect."

We have, in writing, other assurances of loyalty not only to the Lutheran Confessions, but to conservative Lutheran principles of church-life and congregational practise, all accentuating the fact that there are deep lines of cleavage within the Norwegian Lutheran Church. This is freely recognized by close observers. Dr. E. E. Ryden said in 1932 (*N. L. C. Bulletin*, July 1) regarding the convention of the Norwegian Lutheran Church: "Fellow-Lutherans who have just recently decided to live and labor together under one synodical roof are prone to ask: Have the former synodical lines been obliterated during these fifteen years among you Norwegians who took the initial step in recent Lutheran mergers? To such a question there is but one answer, and that is unfortunately an emphatic negative." Writing in the *Lutheran Herald*, Dr. L. W. Boe, president of St. Olaf College, said in 1933 regarding the members of the same body: "One does not need to

scratch very deeply on any one of us before he finds the old synod, Hauge's, or United Church man."

The simple truth is that the Norwegian Union was not built upon real unity of conviction. We have been reminded by Rev. Norman A. Madson of a parallel from Bacon's essay *Of Unity in Religion*. Bacon wrote in 1625: "There be also two false peaces, or unities; the one, when the peace is grounded but upon an implicit ignorance (for all colors will agree in the dark); the other, when it is pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points. For truth and falsehood in such things are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image; they may cleave, but they will not incorporate." Rev. Madson is right when he says: "That the union which was effected by the Norwegian Lutheran churches in 1917 was pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points is not first of all our accusation; it is the frank admission of the unionists themselves. In their official report of 1928 they state that 'the union was consummated, not because any of the three synods changed their views on theological questions or had lost respect for the tendencies which they represented, but simply because our common Christian faith and our common blood compelled it.'"

The Norwegian Lutheran Church will never have peace so long as the Haugean Pietists (they glory in that term) regard themselves as the "true believers" and are maintaining the old opposition to the other Lutherans of Norwegian descent. Then there is a respectable party of men who do not agree with the *Opgjoer* and even challenge us to prove that they have ever subscribed to it. Then there are the old anti-Missourians, who to the present day hold the synergistic view of conversion and predestination. Finally, there is a considerable number, and among these

some prominent men, who indulge in unionistic services without the least compunction. Certainly the Norwegian Lutheran Church cannot invite others to enter into union with it. The most that would be feasible would be to join one of the factions constituting that body. We invite any one to study the situation in the large Norwegian body as it exists to-day, and it will become clear that by joining this organization, we would merely strengthen one or the other party and would add to the severity of the conflict.

#### 4. THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH.

The American Lutheran Church consists of the former Joint Synod of Ohio, the former Iowa Synod, and the former Buffalo Synod, which united at Toledo, O., in 1930. Negotiations had been entered into for a number of years. In 1926 Iowa voted for organic union, but the Joint Synod of Ohio objected to the wording of the doctrinal statement in regard to the Scriptures. The original text of Section 1, Article 1, reads: "The synod accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the only inerrant source, norm, and guide of faith and life." (The inerrancy of the Bible accordingly is asserted only of matters of faith and morals.) In its final adoption the word "inerrant" was placed after "inspired," making it read: "inspired and inerrant Word of God and the only source," etc. (This makes also historical and scientific statements of the Bible free from all error.) The discussion of the doctrine of inspiration had preceded the merger by several years. On various occasions, representatives of the Ohio Synod (Dr. H. Hein) and of the Iowa Synod (Dr. Reu) as also resolutions of both synods asserted the inerrancy and verbal inspiration of the Bible in the clearest possible terms. Yet there is a measure of uncertainty regarding this question: Is the inerrancy of

the Bible really a doctrine of Scripture? Is any departure from it divisive of fellowship? The constitution of the American Lutheran Church as finally adopted has Article 2, Section 1, as follows: "The synod accepts the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life." However, there is an appendix, which reads as follows: "Official interpretation of Section I, Article II: The synod believes that the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments in their original texts are, as a whole and in all their parts, the inspired and inerrant Word of God and accepts these books in the now generally recognized texts as substantially identical with the original texts and as the only inspired and inerrant authority, source, guide, and norm of faith and life." Was it only poor statesmanship, or is there a tendency away from verbal inspiration that had to be satisfied? At any rate, the future will tell whether the A. L. C. will refuse fellowship to those who deny the inerrancy of the Bible on any point. In the *Concordia Theological Monthly* (1932, p. 838 ff.) Dr. P. E. Kretzmann discusses the deliberations which led up to the adoption of the paragraphs just referred to. He quotes verbatim from expressions of Dr. Reu, from resolutions of the Iowa Synod (1928), from an address by Dr. Hein of the Ohio Synod, and from articles that have appeared in the *Kirchenblatt* and in the *Pastor's Monthly* (both Ohio Synod), which "bring out the doctrine of verbal inspiration and of absolute inerrancy of Scripture with a definiteness that must cause every Lutheran theologian to rejoice." But Dr. Kretzmann is troubled with the same misgivings that I must confess to when I read the constitution of the A. L. C. He asks, after reciting the discussion that preceded the organization in 1930: "Is the inerrancy of the Bible really understood to be a clear doc-

trine of Scripture and not simply a theological or dogmatic deduction? And will the new church-body consistently remain separate from those who do not confess that it is a doctrine of Scripture?"

The A. L. C. accepts "each and all of the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as the true exposition and presentation of the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." It has an excellent paragraph against unionistic practises in Article 2, Section 3: "The synod regards unity in doctrine and practise as the necessary prerequisite for church-fellowship and therefore adheres to the rule 'Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors only and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only' and rejects unionism in all its forms."

Section 4 is a strong disapproval of secret orders: "The synod is earnestly opposed to all organizations or societies, secret or open, which, without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of the eternal God, incarnate in order to be our only Savior from sin, are avowedly religious or practise forms of religion, teaching salvation by works. It declares such organizations and societies to be antichristian and rejects any fellowship with them."

The merger of Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo is so recent that a characterization of this organization must take note of the attitude of the constituent bodies during the years immediately preceding the merger.

The Ohio Synod, organized 1818, from 1872 until the election controversy broke, was a member of the Synodical Conference. A spokesman in the *Lutheran World Almanac* of 1921, p. 92, states the case thus: "When the Missouri Synod and some other members of the Synodical Conference adopted the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination [!] in 1881, the Joint Synod of Ohio severed its



relations with them and since then has had no formal connection with other Lutheran organizations." It is evident that this writer, like Dr. Lenski and Dr. Gohdes, represents the old Ohio Synod attitude in the doctrine of election and conversion. Dr. Gohdes, in a contribution to *Lutheran Youth*, of which he was editor, in 1928 said: "Our Missourian friends rank all other Lutherans as errorists, to whom no souls dare be entrusted." Briefly speaking, the doctrine to which Gohdes and also Dr. Lenski object is the doctrine that God has chosen certain persons out of grace unto faith and eternal life. The old Ohio position was (and still is) that the difference in the degree or kind of resistance to the Gospel accounts for the election of some and the rejection of others. While negotiations were on between the Missouri, Wisconsin, Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo synods, and a set of theses had been published by the joint committee which contained endorsements of the Formula of Concord doctrine, Dr. Lenski felt himself called upon in the fall of 1923 to write a series of twelve articles which stoutly maintain the old Ohio position. Dr. Lenski, as chief dogmatician and editor of the *Kirchenblatt*, certainly wrote with some authority. Members of the Ohio Synod's Intersynodical Committee pronounced these articles unbiblical and un-Lutheran; but when our own committee addressed the Ohio Synod in session at Pittsburgh in 1924 with an inquiry, asking what action might be expected on the Lenski articles, no action was taken. Dr. Lenski was not reelected editor, due to ill health. He has maintained the same position on the disputed points in the *Kirchenblatt* as recently as January, 1932. The doctrine that election follows in point of time *after* the call (the elect being all those "who do not prevent by their *no* that their calling becomes their election") was maintained in an editorial of the *Kirchenblatt*, October 8, 1932. Predestination in

view of faith is upheld in the *Lutheran Standard* of December 23, 1933, in the course of a book review: "The one serious objection to this book is that it rejects the Lutheran doctrine of predestination. When the author states that 'some Lutherans' teach an election 'in view of faith,' his statement is not strong enough; the doctrine of election in view of faith is *the doctrine of the Lutheran Church* [italics those of the reviewer himself], recognized as such for centuries by friend and foe. Even if the phrase 'in view of faith' had not as yet been formulated, the doctrine itself is clearly confessed in the Formula of Concord. [?] . . . In the bulk of his book the author, constantly warning his readers against 'fanatical and Reformed influence,' exhibits a high degree of Lutheran consciousness. All the more do we regret the fact that in his doctrine of election he is stepping on dangerous, un-Lutheran ground." Rev. E. Poppen of Detroit tells the story of the Lutheran Church in Michigan. Speaking of the eighties of the past century, he writes: "Rev. C. H. Rohe was among those who rejected the new-Missourian doctrine of election. He was attacked violently and declared a heretic. But he was able to defend himself very well and to demonstrate the agreement of his doctrinal position with the Scriptures and the Confessions. He could not remain a member of the Missouri Synod, but left it with his congregation's approval." (*Kirchenblatt*, December 2, 1933.) Prof. George J. Fritschel, writing the biography of Sigmund Fritschel, says: "In the early days of the Iowa Synod, Missouri had a great string of victories, one synod after another submitted to it—Ohio, Wisconsin, Illinois. Only little despised Iowa had the courage of attacking as un-Lutheran the position of the big synod. Sigmund Fritschel was called to be among the leaders of this conflict." (*Kirchenblatt*, January 27, 1934.)

Evidently there is a good deal of the old anti-Missourian attitude left in the A. L. C. There is also a Missourian element, which whole-heartedly subscribed to the Chicago Theses adopted by the Intersynodical Committee in 1926. An article by Dr. Denef (formerly Buffalo), entitled "The Mystery of the Spirit," states in most beautiful language the mystery of predestination and conversion as taught in the Formula of Concord. (*Kirchenblatt*, February 4, 1933.) Then there is a middle-of-the-road party, represented by the "selective unionism" with other Lutheran bodies (but not with the Reformed), advocated by Dr. C. B. Gohdes. There is a liberal element fraternizing with the U. L. C. and close to it in spirit, its clergy holding membership in sectarian ministerial associations. But compared with the U. L. C. and the Swedes, this liberal element is not strong, and to emphasize these shortcomings would not be fair to the body as such, as little as we would charge the A. L. C. with chiliasm because a few *Entgleisungen* in this direction have taken place in its literature.

There is in many quarters a conscientious effort to check the inroads of lodgery. We have seen mimeographed sheets prepared for their catechumens by A. L. C. ministers which listed the reasons (in one case twelve) against secret orders. In the *Kirchenzeitung* of July 2, 1927, the editor said: "Among the things that stand in the way of union among Lutheran synods there is the miserable lodge question. We are willing to admit that in the Ohio Synod there are imperfections in the 'lodge practises.' But this is not a matter of indifference to us. We want to be sincere in every article of Scripture and Confession. There must be no cessation of testifying and warning against the lodge. It must be done with greater emphasis. May God bless such testimony wherever it occurs unto the glory of His name and the upbuilding of His kingdom!"

In its temper and spirit, its public testimony, its preaching, its attitude towards social and political questions, the American Lutheran Church is more closely related to the Synodical Conference than the other Lutheran synods. Unfortunately for the probability of restoring fellowship relations the American Lutheran Church has found it expedient to join with the Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes in the American Lutheran Conference. And this complicates matters.

#### 5. THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CONFERENCE.

This is the name of a new federation of American Lutheran synods, which was organized at a convention in Minneapolis, October 29—31, 1930. The constituent bodies are the following: the old Joint Synod of Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo (now the American Lutheran Church), the Lutheran Free Church (Norwegian), the United Danish Church, the Augustana Synod (Swedish), and the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. The constitution lists such purposes as the following: Allocation of Work in Home Mission Fields, Elementary and Higher Christian Education, Inner Mission Work (Christian Social Service), Student Service in State Schools and Universities, Foreign Missions and Other Missionary Activities, Joint Publication of Christian Literature, Periodic Exchange of Theological Professors. Its confessional paragraph (Article 2) reads thus: "The American Lutheran Conference accepts the canonical books of the Old and the New Testament as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life and the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as the true presentation of the pure doctrine of the Word of God and a summary of the faith." Strictly speaking, it is a federation, not an organic union of synods. None of the participating bodies lost its autonomy. All continue to func-

tion as independent Lutheran church-bodies. But its objects are "mutual counsel concerning the faith, life, and work of the Church" and "cooperation in matters of common interest and responsibility." The new organization was to have "such powers only as may be specifically delegated to it by the constituent bodies." Otherwise its province is "limited to counsel and advice in matters of common interest and those in which advice may be sought."

Dr. T. F. Gullixson said when the conference was in process of formation: "The future of the American Lutheran Conference is rooted in, and guaranteed by, mutual loyalties to the Confessions of the Lutheran Church and to the accepted principles of Lutheran practises as outlined in the constitution of the Conference and in the Minneapolis Theses as basis thereto."

Regarding church-fellowship the Minneapolis Agreement said "that the rule 'Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors only and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only' is not only in full accord with, but necessarily implied in, the teachings of the divine Word and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. This rule, implying the rejection of all unionism and syncretism, must be observed as setting forth a principle elementary to sound and conservative Lutheranism."

Dr. Boe of St. Olaf College said that perfect union exists between the bodies which are federated in the American Lutheran Conference and that, even as between the Synodical Conference and the United Lutheran Church, "fundamentally there is no difference in doctrine if we base our judgment of these things on official declarations."

What are the actual relations of these bodies?

It may not mean so much that Norway and Iowa clashed on the parish-school question at the organization

meeting of the American Lutheran Conference. The *Minneapolis Journal* of October 31, 1930, reports the following: "Adoption of a parochial-school system in furthering the presentation of a united front of the seven synods was advocated by Dr. M. Reu, professor at Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, yesterday. The proposal was opposed by Dr. C. K. Bruce of Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, who declared such a move would mean the disruption of the public-school system, which, he said, 'with all its shortcomings is the bulwark of the American nation.'" But things have not been so very happy between the German and the Scandinavian constituents in the Conference. There is disagreement especially on the attitude towards prohibition. The Swedish and Norwegian bodies adopted resolutions urging their members to vote against repeal and, more recently, in favor of restoring prohibition, in local and in national elections. On the other hand, ministers as well as people in the old Ohio and Iowa Synod groups consider this a sectarian mixing of Church and State, and legalism to boot. In the year of grace 1933 we have had this resolution: "Be it resolved that the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, in convention assembled, urge upon its members to make earnest and prayerful efforts in home, school, and church to teach children and youth the harmfulness and sinfulness of the drink evil and that we as citizens again rally to the prompt support of organizations that stand for total abstinence and the destruction of the liquor traffic." In the same year, in the June and July issues of *The Pastor's Monthly*, Rev. Wm. Schoeler (A. L. C.) shows that the whole Bible is in conflict with prohibition.

We have noted that in the American Lutheran Conference two Norwegian bodies hold membership, the large Norwegian Church and the smaller Lutheran Free Church.

*Folkebladet* is the official organ of the Free Church; *Lutheraneren*, the organ of the N. L. C. In 1931 a conference of Protestant pastors of the State of Minnesota, both Reformed and Lutheran, was held in St. Paul, Minn. Ministers and professors of the Free Church and of the Norwegian Lutheran Church participated. *Folkebladet* had nothing but praise for the arrangements and pronounced such meetings as on the whole a blessing for Protestantism (January 21, 1931). Again: "It was a new testimony to the great unity which, after all, exists among the Protestant churches. . . . It is true that such meetings in certain quarters are regarded as the most sinful of 'sinful unionism.' . . . However, one does not testify to the Gospel by continually setting forth 'the pure doctrine,' but by living, and witnessing for, the Christ-life on the basis of sound doctrine in the individual congregation and in the great community. And here no spook from Marburg must stand in the way." It is clear that the Free Church is broadly unionistic in principle. *Lutheraneren* protested against the attitude of *Folkebladet*: "We are amazed and saddened when we read this bitter ridiculing of those who stand by the old Lutheran principles that there must be no unionistic mixture of Lutheran and Reformed elements. . . . The momentous events at Marburg, where Luther had his dispute with the Reformed, are declared to be a mere spook. This is certainly a fearful judgment upon Luther and of all those sound and profound Lutheran theologians who during these four centuries have stood on the same ground as Luther" (February 18, 1931). A few weeks later *Folkebladet* said: ". . . Its [Lutheran Free Church] pastors and congregations will continue to invite whom they will to preach in their churches, whether it is a Lutheran or a Reformed pastor or some other speaker, when it is a person in whose Christianity they have confidence, just as it is now

done quite extensively also in the Norwegian Lutheran Church, fortunately" (April 29, 1931).

In 1932 the Protestant fellowship meeting again took place in Minneapolis. *Lutheraneren*, in an editorial appearing January 13, protested against members of the Church taking part. It quotes the names of officers and speakers from Lutheran churches listed on the program, and among them Dr. G. M. Bruce's name appears. Dr. Bruce is professor of theology in the seminary of the Norwegian Lutheran Church. The following statement is made: "Whether or not the Norwegian Lutheran Church will tolerate that its functionaries and clerical members venture into such 'interdenominational fellowships' will be a matter for the administrative authorities to decide. It is the purpose of our Church to preserve our Lutheran heritage. It is therefore definitely opposed to that unionism which in this case is practised and which, if continued and developed, will in times like the present prepare a subtle way for rationalism." *Folkebladet* again, January 20, rose in defense of unionism, censuring *Lutheraneren* for the above-quoted statements. Thus: "We for our part must look upon that kind of isolation which reveals itself by combating 'unionism,' so called, as a sort of means of coercion, like a ruler which is swung over the heads of pupils by schoolmasters for punishment and maintenance of order or, if you will, as a fulmination of excommunication which is to scare into subjection. In this way one makes that to be sin which is no sin. Actually, it appears to us that the very act of combating 'unionism' is the real sin. In this instance the thought is of 'unionism' with such as adhere to the historical Christian faith. It does not need to mean that one is ready to join them in organic union."

Once more, in February, 1934, over a hundred Protestant pastors met for a day of spiritual fellowship, this time

in Grace Lutheran Church, Dr. J. A. O. Stub of Central Lutheran Church opening the meeting with meditation and prayer and Dr. Charles N. Pace (Methodist) presenting a "Lenten message."

It appears, then, that the dissension on the question of unionism with the sects is an unsettled issue not only between various bodies of the American Lutheran Conference, but within the Norwegian Lutheran Church itself. In 1933 President Knubel of the U. L. C. was a guest of honor at special meetings arranged by members of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in the Twin Cities. Dr. Stub was so carried away by the occasion that he suggested a union of all Lutherans in America into one body, who would then elect Dr. Knubel archbishop. In order that he might receive the genuine apostolic succession, he would (we are still quoting) have to get his installation from the Archbishop of Sweden. *Folkebladet*, the organ of the Norwegian Free Church, found fault with this proposition, not because it called for a unionistic fellowship, but because a body organized with an archbishop at its head would probably prevent cooperation with denominations outside the Lutheran Church!

*Folkebladet* has often expressed views dissenting from the conservative standpoint occupied by the N. L. C. in matters of doctrine. As translated by H. M. Tjernagel, the paper spoke in 1926 (No. 17), in a discussion of the question "Are we threatened by Liberalism?" as follows: "What is in reality Liberalism? It is not an altogether simple matter to give answer to that. Some views are wrongfully called Liberalism. There is a tendency to consider everything that does not fall into the folds of old traditions in every way as Liberalism, while it should by right be called progress. Many points of view must necessarily be changed down through the ages; we know as yet only in



part. There are a number of such changed views that, when first proclaimed, were considered altogether wrong, but have nevertheless won recognition in Christian thought. . . . For example, St. Bernard . . . taught that the atoning death of Jesus freed man from the power of Satan, but in such a way that the atonement was a sacrifice to Satan. Then came other thinkers and church leaders who presented the matter in another way. The atoning death of Jesus is a sacrifice to God for the sins of man; consequently two entirely opposite opinions. This theory [!] has ultimately won recognition in the Church. There are changed views concerning the question of inspiration. There was a time when that view of the inspiration now held by a majority of orthodox theologians in Norway would have been regarded as a digression from the doctrine of the Church and, in a sense, been considered Liberalism. Now, however, there are very few theologians, and, assuredly, no eminently learned ones, even of the conservative school, who hold the old doctrine of verbal inspiration."

What are we to think of this? Former Norwegian Synod men have expressed their joy that all Norwegians are now united in "loyalty to Christ and the Word." Dr. C. C. Hein and many others with him in the Ohio Synod have stood firm against modifying the expression "inerrancy of the Bible." Do they now acknowledge as brethren in the faith those who openly deny verbal inspiration?

It is such situations that we had in mind when we said that there are lines of cleavage running vertically as well as horizontally.

Commenting on the conventions of 1934, *Folkebladet* said editorially: "It was an event of importance that the meeting sent the president, Dr. Hein, to the convention of the United Church at Savannah in order to prepare for

closer relation between the two churches. Dr. Hein, it is reported, spoke well and in a conciliatory manner; but there are differences of opinion as to the result. There were indeed a number of pastors in the United Lutheran Church who were much provoked by Dr. Hein's speech. He had actually mentioned right out things that were a hindrance to closer relations. Among these things was the fact that the United Church permits its pastors to belong to Freemasons and other lodges. It stands to reason indeed that those pastors who are Freemasons did not like this. Concerning members of the congregations nothing was said; but the American Lutheran Church, like many other Lutheran bodies, would presumably prefer to see also people of the congregations keep away from Freemasonry. But then it was unionism. The United Lutheran Church is supposed to be addicted to keeping company with Christians of Reformed confessions or at least is not strict enough with its pastors in this respect. That must surely be guarded against and can presumably not be tolerated if there is to be altar- and pulpit-fellowship between the two churches." This gibe is in agreement with the same paper's oft-repeated judgment that there is no such thing as sinful unionism. It is therefore with a certain rejoicing that it comments on the convention of the American Lutheran Conference of the same year: "The question of unionism should again have been up for discussion and treatment; but by a skilful and quick maneuver of the presidents of the synods present this was unrigged (*avtaklet*). The question is now left high in the air and will presumably dissolve into its chief element, which is gas." The comment of the *Lutheran Sentinel* (Norwegian Synod) is interesting: "When *Folkebladet* uses the technical term for unrigging a ship concerning the treatment of the question of unionism by the presidents of the synods, it is clearly to

be understood that this question was handled in such a way that it cannot be brought up for discussion again. . . . We believe, however, that the officials did not quash the question of unionism because they believe that unionism is merely a puff of gas, but because they see clearly that it is a real hot iron, which cannot be handled among them without burning the ties that hold their federation<sup>12)</sup> together."

That there is a strong reaction against unionistic services in the Norwegian Lutheran Church, due chiefly to the old Norwegian Synod element, is evident. The official organs uphold the stand against fraternizing with the Reformed sects. In the *Lutheran Church Herald* of February 24, 1931, Rev. Olaf Turmo wrote: "All teaching of false doctrine is disobedience to God, and as disobedience it is sin." In support of this position he quotes 1 Pet. 4, 11; 2 Tim. 1, 13; 2 Tim. 2, 2; Titus 1, 9. The writer concludes: —

"Because all departure from the true doctrine of God's Word is sin, you make yourself a partaker in the sins of others by the practise of unionism. And not that alone, but you are also confirming them in their mistaken conviction that there is nothing dangerously wrong about what they believe and teach. If any church denomination or any individuals sin by departing from the truth of God's Word in their doctrine and in their worship, which they do if they do not believe and teach according to God's Word, then it is your duty to testify against such sin by not fraternizing with those who commit it. All who deviate from the truth of the Word of God are, so far as they do so, false teachers, however well-meaning they may be and however sincere their convictions. If their activities bear all the earmarks of sincerity and of a deep personal piety, that does not lessen, but rather increases, the harm to the Church which their *false* teachings will do, namely, by increasing by so much the power of their influence to lead men away from the truth in the points of doctrine in which they teach *falsely*."

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12) The American Lutheran Conference.

Most excellent. But the writer is in fellowship with the American Lutheran Church, and soon after his article had appeared, Pittsburgh papers carried the story of union services in which four pastors of the A. L. C. held joint services with Reformed ministers. (*Concordia Theological Monthly*, 1931, p. 580.)

Dr. Lenski's new commentary, *Interpretation of St. John's Revelation* (1935), pours ridicule on every form of chiliasm and declares it to be without a shred of proof from Scripture, while Norwegian and Swedish theologians, in communion with him through the American Lutheran Conference, defend with great energy even the most extravagant forms of millennialism. Can real fellowship exist where the interpretation of hundreds of Scripture-texts is in such acrimonious dispute?

A minister of the American Lutheran Church writes an essay on the millennium which represents the soundly Lutheran position on that subject. Members of the Norwegian Synod request him to publish it; but he is unable to find a Scandinavian publisher "because the printing of the essay would lead to controversy." It is quite clear that there are extremes of interpretation on this point in the A. L. Conference. Not only that, but within the A. L. Church itself the writer was advised against seeking any official backing for his essay. As a result he offered it to a Missouri Synod publisher. We can vouch for the facts as given above. They illuminate the Lutheran landscape like a great revolving beacon-light on an aviation field. Aside from every other consideration, by joining the American Lutheran Conference our own Synod would only join a faction, to the confusion of the propagandists for chiliasm and to the creation of public antagonisms where outwardly at least there is peace.

The *Wachende Kirche*, once the organ of the Buffalo Synod, was outspoken enough on Freemasonry to this

effect: "Freemasons and other lodges have no right in the Church of Christ. Not only because of their silly pomp and variegated ceremonies, but because with their denial of the divine Trinity and of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, with their righteousness void of faith, and their 'regeneration' without water and spirit, with their prayers without Christ's name, and their shameless abuse of the Bible, they are by no means churches of Jesus Christ, but churches of Satan." We have no reason to believe that the men who uttered these words have changed their opinion now that they are in the A. L. C. But this body, as a member of the American Lutheran Conference, is in fellowship with Augustana, which treats the lodge as a dead issue.

In the *Lutheran Standard* (1935) Dr. E. Gerfen writes an incisive article on lodge-membership and the duty of the Church towards lodge-members.

Writing in the *Kirchenblatt*, official organ of the American Lutheran Church, Rev. W. Schmoee, a visitor to this country from Germany, discusses "The Lodge — a Burning Question for the Church of America." Let me translate the closing paragraphs of this article: —

"The present Lutheran Church of America may be proud of bringing to this country the tradition of the old Lutheran Church of Germany. It accordingly has a sacred and high duty. It must be on its guard and not permit any movement or organization to obscure the clear light of the Gospel. According to the observations made during my stay in this country the lodges are the greatest menace for the churches of America. They constitute a matter of life and death for these churches. There might be timid and diplomatic excuses, as, for instance: 'Shall we put them [members of lodges] out at once? Shall we not permit them to hear the Word of God? Has not the Lord said that "both should grow until the harvest"?' To such I would make the reply: In the first place, lodge men are not to be tolerated as members of the Church. In the second place, let them hear the Word of God as visitors. 'Let both go to the harvest,' He is able to speak by virtue of His inviolate justice, His omnipotence,

His eternal grace and goodness. For us weak creatures the words must stand: 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.' Since the Lord Himself says: 'Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven,' Freemasons are to be excluded from church-membership; for they undermine the foundation of the Christian Church, which is to be grounded upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Himself being the Corner-stone. Churches with this foundation can never be overwhelmed by the gates of hell, as Christ Himself says. The false fear of losing Freemasons as contributing members is absolutely to be condemned. Let me quote the words of a hymn in this connection: —

"The cause is Thine, Lord Jesus Christ,  
The cause in which we stand;  
And because it is Thy cause,  
It cannot perish."

I am quoting this extract with some fulness in order to give as much prominence to expressions encouraging to the outlook of ultimate Lutheran union as I have given elsewhere to expressions that raise up obstacles to that happy event. But is not the question justifiable: Here are leaders of the old Ohio and Buffalo synods testifying against secretism while their brethren in the Swedish Lutheran body receive the lodge with open arms — *whom would we join by joining the American Lutheran Conference?*

Dr. Paul H. Andreen of Rock Island said in the *Lutheran Companion* of September 24, 1932: "The American Lutheran Conference is in its 'trial stage.' The Norwegian Lutheran Church is not as enthusiastic about it as the Augustana Synod and the American Lutheran Church seem to be. It is a question whether our synod will find the fellowship of the Joint Synod of Ohio and the Iowa Synod, German, more congenial than that offered by the United Lutheran Church. Whether our synod is 'sold' on this new merger is still debatable. . . . The American Lutheran Conference is not functioning with the enthusiasm its promoters expected." In a conference paper from which

we have already quoted, Rev. John O. Lang, a member of the A. L. C., said October 1, 1934: "The American Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Conference are both comparatively new bodies. There do not exist within them those gross differences of opinion which are in evidence in some parts of the United Lutheran Church, but there are differences, and some of them quite marked, with reference to the practical application of the principles set forth in the official constitutions. We are still in the formative state, and it would no doubt be much more advantageous for us to seek to arrive at a greater unity among ourselves before we seek to reach out and establish greater fellowship." This pretty well states the thesis of the present essay.

Elsewhere we have quoted the expression of the *Lutheran Standard* of 1933, reasserting the belief in the *intuitu fidei*, called unscriptural by Dr. Reu. Now, what is remarkable is the fact that the A. L. C. reviewer in the sentences quoted criticizes a book by Dr. Little (U. L. C.) of Waterloo, Can., *Disputed Doctrines*, a book which we, who are not, like the A. L. C. editor, committed to fraternal undertakings with the U. L. C., would accept and have publicly accepted as correct in every doctrine of the faith!

In his review of Professor Mueller's translation of *Essays* by Dr. Pieper, Professor Reu of the American Lutheran Church makes certain reservations regarding our own doctrine of election, but acknowledges a "deep gulf" between our doctrine and that of Calvin and then makes this significant statement: "We, too, regard the predestination 'in view of faith' (*intuitu fidei*) as a theological construction that has no Scriptural ground, while predestination unto faith is the clear doctrine of Scripture." (*Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 1932, p. 502.) In joining the American Lutheran Conference therefore, we should be compelled to make common cause with Dr. Reu against the theologians

who defend "election in view of faith" as the teaching of Scripture. Would this in any sense contribute to the unity of the A. L. C.? Commenting on this conflict among A. L. C. spokesmen, the *Concordia Theological Monthly* said in 1933: "These men certainly do not agree. What is the position of the A. L. C.?"

#### 6. THE CENTER OF THE PROBLEM.

Cooperative endeavors on a fraternal basis now link together practically all Lutheran bodies in the United States and Canada except those affiliated with the Synodical Conference. The most important of these is the National Lutheran Council, which is an official agency, with headquarters in New York. It came into existence during the World War as a service institution and has since been continuing as an agency for relief and for tiding over the institutions and missions of European Lutherans, also in the foreign fields. The Council has a valuable publicity service and every second year publishes the *Lutheran World Almanac*. In this Council are represented the U. L. C., the A. L. Conference, and the Icelandic Synod.

Other associations and conferences with special interests that have developed during the past twenty years are the following: —

The National Lutheran Educational Conference (plans cooperation in theological studies and suggests higher standards in colleges). The Lutheran Home Missions Council (for the coordination and more economical conduct of missions in America). The National Lutheran Inner Mission Conference (unites workers in the city-mission and social-service fields). The Lutheran Foreign Missions Conference (to develop a plan of Cooperative Possibilities on the Part of the Lutheran Foreign Boards in America). The Intersynodical Committee on Elemen-

tary Religious Education (to work out a common curriculum for Sunday-schools and other cooperation in primary education). Lutheran Student Association of America (to promote Lutheran fellowship and to emphasize the relation of the Church to the life of the college student). Association of Lutheran Seminary Students. The Intersynodical Catechism Committee (completed a revision of the Small Catechism in English in 1928). The American Federation of Lutheran Brotherhoods (holds biennial conventions and stresses the union of Lutheran bodies as a major objective). The Conference of Sunday-school Editors. The Association of Lutheran Editors. The Conference on Stewardship. The Conference of Evangelical Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouses in America. In addition, there are many joint enterprises of an educational and a charitable nature. In the Twin Cities nine synodical groups are represented in the Lutheran Welfare Society (with a home-finding department and a receiving home). There are Lutheran Bible-schools in Chicago and Minneapolis. Also the exchange of fraternal delegates between the women's missionary societies of the U. L. C., Augustana, the Norwegian Lutheran Church, and other bodies must be reckoned among the factors that have obliterated synodical lines even while the synodical bodies are still independently organized. In China the representatives of the Augustana Synod, the Lutheran Free Church, the United Lutheran Church and the Norwegian Lutheran Church met with other Lutheran missionaries in a general assembly of the Lutheran Church in China in June, 1934. These bodies also have union enterprises, such as a church-paper, a Lutheran Board of Publication, a theological seminary, a Lutheran home in Hankow, etc. In the report of the meeting at Shanghai the "mutual Christian fellowship of the delegates" was emphasized. In the Lutheran World Conventions we have cooperation on the widest possible scale be-

tween the various American Lutheran bodies, except the Synodical Conference, on the one hand, and the various Lutheran church-bodies of Europe, on the other. The delegates of these bodies meet in fraternal conference, and in the Continuing Committee this relation is kept alive between meetings.

The significance of these cooperative movements has been completely overlooked. We have found many references to them as examples of a gradual approach towards Lutheran union. They are more than that. They are evidence and proof of a union that already exists. These cooperative efforts are by no means in externals only. Note the difference. There is no Christian fellowship, but only a similarity of problems and interests involved when, let me say, Lutheran statisticians meet together or Lutheran publishers. But to conduct the educational work of the Church by joint deliberations and to formulate its missionary program; to consult together in conference as Inner Mission workers and editors,—this is more than a coordination or mutual helpfulness in externals. No one can read the reports of these meetings without being struck by a feature that is identical in them all—the fraternal relations professed by those who participate in them. Even without opening and closing devotions these conferences are all predicated on a recognition of one another as fellow-Lutherans.

Now, this is a matter of the highest importance. These missionary, educational, and eleemosynary conferences constitute as distinctly a spiritual and religious entity as any synod. The essential thing is the mutual recognition, the fraternal relationship. The intersynodical organizations mentioned have it as much as the synodical organizations themselves. And thus we arrive at the strange result that all that still needs to be debated between these bodies is the question of actually giving up their synodical organiza-



tions and merging U. L. C., A. L. C., Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, Icelanders, Slovaks, and Finns into a single body organized under a single president or bishop.

As for the Synodical Conference, nothing would please us better than to be able to say to the other Lutheran groups: Go your way in peace and be happy in the union you have found. But unfortunately we cannot approve of these joint arrangements. We cannot approve of fellowship relations where the lines of cleavage run horizontally, vertically, and diagonally, as we have seen. We cannot approve of the fraternal relations which exist between the conservative and the radical elements in the U. L. C. We cannot approve of the mechanical union that gathers three or even four discordant elements into one Norwegian Lutheran Church. We cannot approve of the union of conservative Ohio or Buffalo Synod elements with Swedish radicals and chiliasts in the A. L. Conference. As for the major thesis of this essay: That by joining any of the bodies mentioned we would join only a faction and either become the cause of new and sharper conflicts or, worse still, ourselves become tolerant of false doctrine through such new associations — this has surely been proved to the satisfaction of every reader. We can see nothing in the offing but the toilsome road of conferences that first of all will settle the definition of the causes of separation and then, by the help of God, remove these obstacles. The difficulties that lie in that direction are great, but they are not insuperable. The problem of Lutheran union is not insoluble.

It is not necessary to attribute insincerity to those who associate freely with others in every kind of cooperation and yet declare that they have no fellowship or fraternal relations. The difference is in the definition of Christian fellowship. For example, the *Lutheran Standard* of

August 21, 1926, reported expressions made at the Northwestern District of the then Ohio Synod favoring the move of sitting in with a joint Home Mission committee of the U. L. C., Augustana, and the Norwegians. The purpose of this council was "to coordinate the mission activities of the various Lutheran synods in such a way that existing opposition work be eliminated as much as possible and avoided altogether in the founding of new work." Now, we of the Missouri Synod would look upon such cooperation as not so much an indication, as actual demonstration and practise, of church-fellowship. But this is the continuation of the report: "As to other joint activities the position was taken that everything which must be interpreted as pulpit- and altar-fellowship should be avoided" —! It is clear that we have not the same definition of fellowship.

As for our relation to sectarian churches, there would be a better prospect of Lutheran union if we could all subscribe to the words of Theo. Schmauk, who in 1907 wrote on the external relationships of the Lutheran Church: —

"There is a common ground for all Christians in Christ. Those whom Christ recognizes despite their errors and imperfections are already one with us in Christ. They may not be one with us in mind and faith, they may not be one with us in those particular parts of our mind and faith which we feel divinely called to stand for and exposit, and hence we may be unable to feel and say that they are in a common brotherhood of faith, because we earnestly believe that, although Christ can receive them as they are unto Himself without danger to His truth; we cannot do so with the same safety. Christ can do all things. We must do in accordance with our convictions."

Golden words.

Or one might propose for a touchstone of the right attitude on pulpit-fellowship the following statement made by a Tennessee Synod pastor, Rev. B. D. Wessinger, in the *Lutheran Church Visitor* of January 28, 1915: —

"The Tennessee Synod does not believe in an exchange of pulpits with the denominations around us. Her rule is that Lutheran pulpits should be for Lutheran pastors. To many this appears narrow. Even some who subscribe to the Confessions and are proud of the name and history of the Lutheran Church are not willing to admit the correctness of this position. But let us look the matter fairly and squarely in the face. Protestantism is divided into a number of denominations, each having a distinct name and each standing for certain distinctive doctrines. Because of their avowed belief in these things they have withdrawn and formed a separate organization. The Baptists believe that only those who are immersed have been properly baptized. The Methodists believe the Sacrament to be only a memorial service, in which the bread and wine symbolize Christ's body and blood. So might others be mentioned. Each one stands for certain teachings which others cannot accept. They demand from their pastors an adherence to their doctrines, and one would hardly be retained who is at radical variance with their position. To act consistently, they cannot ask us, nor can we ask them, to exchange pulpits; for they know they are not going to preach our doctrine, and we know we are not going to preach theirs. Nor could we agree to maintain silence regarding the differences. If we really believe that the truth of God's Word has been rightly interpreted in our Confessions, this faith is not such a trifling affair that we can dispense with it to suit the occasion. It is rather such conviction of mind, heart, and conscience that we stand as living confessors and examples of always and everywhere, Luke 24, 48.

"Before we ordain a pastor, we examine him as to his fitness mentally, morally, and spiritually. If qualified, he is ordained to the office of pastor with the sanction of the Church. If we do not allow a Lutheran to preach without this, why allow another? If our own pastors must climb this fence in order to safeguard the preaching of the pure Gospel, why lay it down for those outside when we know they not only do not believe what we do, but stand as avowed disbelievers in what we confess? Whenever the Lutheran Church can entrust the preaching of the Gospel among her people to those who are not Lutherans, she will thereby declare that no real difference exists between her faith and that of others and will therefore have no right to maintain a separate existence. We do not deny that other denominations are churches, that they accomplish much good, or that many good people are to be found among them. We admit all this, and further, that

much of divine truth is taught by them. It is not because of the true, but of the false teachings which they maintain that we cannot consistently fellowship with them."

Agreement with the principle underlying this presentation would eliminate one of the greatest obstacles, if not the greatest, to Lutheran union.

A writer in the *Wachende Kirche* (Buffalo Synod), in the fall of 1926, commented upon the appeals for a closer fellowship among Lutherans. He is in sympathy with these appeals, but says: —

"We must get clear on this, Would an external union without the true unity in the Spirit actually advance the purpose for which those pleading for a united Lutheran Church are striving?

"Will our testimony remain a savoring salt when we weaken it out of consideration for an external union? Let us frankly state what we have in mind. The United Lutheran Church has taken no stand on the doctrinal questions that have agitated our Church. We consider this attitude that of indifference to the divine truth and therefore a sinful attitude.

"Will my testimony become stronger when my conscience troubles me for the fellowship I am practising and when I try to answer for things for which my conscience forbids me to answer? Will my confession that the Scripture is the infallible Word of God become more powerful when my brother in the ministry denies this and ascribes all kinds of errors to the Bible?

"Of what value is the testimony of a church-body when its members undermine the authority of the Bible or do not preach the Gospel at all?

"Will my testimony against lodgery be strengthened by the fact that my brother minister defends the lodge or even affiliates himself with it?

"Where remains the salt of a synod when one member teaches the 'solely by grace' while the other holds that the natural will of man can under the assistance of the Holy Ghost convert himself, thus denying the 'solely by grace'; when one is tearing down what the other is attempting to build?

"So long as the United Lutheran Church believes that the future belongs to its type of Lutheranism and that the position of the conservative synods is untenable, which we most decidedly

do not believe, we are in the eyes of the United Lutheran Church nothing but an impediment to the progress and development of the Lutheran Church in America. Under such conditions an external cooperation is an impossibility, neither acceptable to God nor approved of men.

"But we are honestly glad that there is rising within the United Lutheran Church a desire for conferences. Even if the purpose some have in mind is not achieved, such conferences make it possible for one to help the other. Therefore we, too, say, Let there be conferences."

As we wrote to a friend in the Norwegian Lutheran Church in 1932: "What is the alternative to our rules of altar- and pulpit-fellowship? I can see only confusion and multiplied offense. Those outside the Synodical Conference are not 'excommunicated' by us when we refuse the hand of fellowship. We simply feel that for relations of fellowship more is needed than the belief that there are Christians among them. Are we to recognize the good *Christians* in the Norwegian Church or Swedish Church and refuse to recognize the *Christians* in the Baptist and Presbyterian churches? Are we to fellowship Protestant Christians, but not Catholic children of God? Where is your logic? Indeed, where is your liberal spirit? To fellowship Lutherans only is far too narrow a principle for me if it is on the basis of the presence of *Christians* in those synods. It would be an insult to the Catholic and Methodist *Christians* to make so restricted a rule of fellowship. But as for acting on our convictions regarding some one's personal Christianity, why, we do not even receive men into *our* churches on such a basis, but solely on the basis of correct *profession* and a practise consistent therewith. This is not only logic, but fairness and true charity — *love that transcends the narrow boundaries of creed while observing the limitations which Christ Himself has established for our communing of others.*"

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## AS OTHERS SEE US.

### I.

Dr. C. F. W. Walther devoted part of a presidential address (1866) to a summary of the opposition which during the first twenty years of its existence the Missouri Synod had met in Lutheran camps both in this country and abroad. We cannot hope to render the magnificent roll and thunder of Dr. Walther's German, but submit a translation nevertheless because of the historical value of his statement. Dr. Walther said: —

"Because we declare the Church which adheres to the Augsburg Confession to be the true visible Church of Christ on earth, while others were declared false churches and sects, we were accused of fostering a Romanistic view of the Church. Because we believed the Lutheran Confessions to be throughout a true expression of Christian faith and demanded that ministers be obligated upon them, we were accused of exalting human writings above the Word of God and of introducing an intolerable coercion of conscience. Because we acknowledged Luther as the Reformer chosen by God Himself and testified that his writings are the true source of information regarding Lutheran doctrine, also that of the Confessions, we were accused of making a God of Luther and ascribing to him the infallibility of a Pope. However, the opposite accusation also was made. Because we protested against the attempts to identify the Lutheran Church with the universal only-saving Church, and because we taught that there are children of God also in the sects and in the Roman Church, we were accused of unionism. And, once more, because we not only opposed all error as a menace to souls, and therefore refrained from all mixing of religion, from all unionism that is not based on unity, hence refused to join those of other convictions for the building of God's kingdom, we were accused of pharisaic intolerance, love of strife, a condemnatory, heartless spirit, and a lack of love and enthusiasm for the Lord's work.

"Because we claim for the ministry only the power of the Word and for every Christian a genuine spiritual priesthood, we were accused of degrading the ministry, surrendering it to the

mood of the rabble, and Christian faith to the popular vote. But since, on the other hand, we made a beginning of Christian order by condemning the temporary hiring of preachers, insisted upon a proper call, retained announcement for Communion, and introduced discipline against the impenitent and errorists, we again, from another direction, were accused of papistical arrogance, priest-rule, and fanaticism.

"Because we would not have our conscience bound by human ordinances, hence chose our own form of government and in general insisted upon freedom in adiaphora, we were by some accused of being enemies of order and wild-eyed sponsors of every kind of license. Strangely enough, others said we were headed towards Rome because we did not condemn as sinful the retention of ancient usages and ceremonies expressive of our faith.

"Once more, because we asserted for each congregation equal rights and powers and denied the establishment of synodical rule, we were accused of separatism, while, on the other hand, because we indeed founded a synod with boards and official visitors, we were accused of plotting hierarchical schemes against the freedom of congregations.

"Because we gave a central position to the doctrine of justification and opposed the 'new measures' of revivalism and, as against all means of grace outside of Word and Sacraments, insisted upon true doctrine, we were denounced as enemies of a living Christianity, as guilty of legalism, as trusting in a dead orthodoxy and a spiritless business of forms. But because we also taught that only in a repentant heart true faith can do its work, we were accused of pietism.

"Because we opposed the new political gospel of innate human rights and universal freedom, we were accused of supporting tyranny and injustice.

"Finally, because we would not yield to the demand for developing doctrine and giving it an admixture of philosophy and for our part claimed no more than a willingness to hold what we have rather than to introduce something new in doctrine and life, we were made the object of accusations of stupid arrogance, of being enemies of theological science and progress; we were pronounced void of spirit and creative power and our theology was branded as simply a dead mechanical drill, a slavish repetition of obsolete themes."

No one who has taken the trouble to read the docu-

ments of American Lutheranism during the fifties and sixties of the past century will accuse Walther of exaggeration, one-sided emphasis, or undue sensitiveness. The newly founded Synod was during these decades an embattled host.

Appreciation indeed was not altogether lacking. As early as 1853, only six years after the founding of our Synod, conservative theologians welcomed Dr. Walther's *Kirche und Amt* as "a glorious American testimonial of faith," to which the reviewer announced his hearty "yes and Amen," and welcomed it as showing the way out of the woods in the controversy then raging about the ministerial office. (*Zeitschrift fuer lutherische Theologie*, Rudelbach-Guericke, 1853, p. 571.) Nor shall we overlook the review, extending to eighteen pages, of the twelfth volume of *Der Lutheraner*, in the same notable magazine that welcomed Walther's classical book on the ministry. The reviewer turns the pages of the German-American periodical and carefully analyzes its major articles and editorial position — a token of profound respect for the theological importance of the editorial work of the Faculty at St. Louis (1857, p. 724 ff.).

The *Lutheraner* impressed conservative Lutherans everywhere and made them "look to America as a new opportunity for the Church of the Reformation." In his autobiography Dr. Traugott Hahn (1926) passes in review the earlier years of his ministry and traces the effect of early impressions upon his career as a Baltic Lutheran. He refers to the *Lutheraner* as expressive of the strictest orthodoxy, but as important also since it was dominated by a great personality. "At the head of the Missouri Synod was Professor Walther, a mighty intellect and a sincere Christian. Against the fearful degradation of Christianity in the United States he protested with all his power of



language and of the pen and without the least trace of fear. Not in the least did he fear even offending thousands of Americans of German origin who turned their backs to the Missouri Synod, whereas otherwise they might have joined. He knew no other guide than the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. Wherever worldliness or laxity appeared in other synods, he pilloried them boldly. The minister of another synod once told me: 'If it were not for the Missouri Synod and Pastor Walther, who keep such jealous watch over American Lutheranism, we other Lutherans would long ago have ceased to be Lutherans or Christians. The Lutheran Church of North America owes everything to this discipline.'

However, the consistent attitude of official German Lutheranism and of the professional theologians was hostile to Missouri. Pastor Rudolph Hoffmann in 1881 published a lecture entitled *Die Missourisynode in Nordamerika, historisch und kritisch beleuchtet*. The lecture rebukes Missouri for rejecting the idea of a development of doctrine, for treating all doctrines as of equal importance, for placing fetters upon free investigation, for showing the spirit of Jesuitism when pastors and synods are instructed to watch over one another, for mechanically reviving the old dogmatics, for treating Scripture only as a collection of proof-texts, — but also for finding fault with the older dogmaticians where they depart from the Scriptures. Missouri lacks modesty. The very idea of a Church independent from the State is condemned — "it can never become a missionary Church!" The authority of the congregation is called "unbiblical and un-Lutheran radicalism." "A synod built upon such foundation cannot endure. Even now it is not improperly remarked that the synod 'rests on two eyes, those of Walther'; when these will be closed, there is danger that doctrine and organization will begin

to tremble and that the end will be a complete breakdown of the synod into its component elements." One is tempted to say a great deal about these criticisms and prophecies. Note, however, that in 1881 a typical conservative German theologian still reiterates the complaints referred to in Walther's address in 1866.

Dr. I. G. Pfeiderer was a famous German theologian of the eighties. In 1882 he visited America and recorded his impression in a book entitled *Amerikanische Reisebilder*. Not a Missourian, but a General Council reviewer, Dr. A. Spaeth, charges that Pfeiderer maligns the Missouri Synod and grossly slanders it. "Through the entire book there is a strain of bitter hatred against this definite Lutheranism of the Missouri Synod. There is an eagerness to land blows against it, regardless of logical sequence, and a fanaticism, which finally does not hesitate to charge it with bare Romanism and with the most hateful Jesuitism." (*Amerikanische Beleuchtung*, A. Spaeth; Philadelphia, 1882.) Twice, says Spaeth, does Pfeiderer charge the Missourian theologians with having prohibited the reading of Hofacker's sermons as "quite Methodistic," — a libel for which Spaeth offered a direct denial from Dr. Walther. The German visitor had not seen Dr. Walther while in St. Louis, but he says that in that city he took occasion to stand in front of the residence of "the great Walther" and had looked at it "von aussen"!!

That was in 1882. Thirty-seven years later the German preacher Rev. W. Michaelis, in the popular magazine *Licht und Leben*, refers to us in this manner: "Among the Missourians a compulsory confession triumphs over brotherly love and unity."

The famous Pastor Le Seur of Berlin, prominent as an evangelist, visits the United States and places his impressions on record: "The Missouri Synod!! I am surprised

that such a tree can grow out of the sowing of Luther. Confessional narrowness has here reached the degree of fanaticism. . . . What could they not achieve if they laid aside these blinders of fanaticism!"

Within the past decade Dr. R. Lempp wrote in the *Kolberger Gemeindeblatt* regarding church conditions in America: "Their pastors are usually not scientifically trained theologians. As a result we have grotesque doctrines and strange interpretations of Scripture. Millennium, Christian Science, Mormons, Spiritists; there is also exaggerated stressing of minor things: Sabbatarians, *Missouri Lutherans*, etc. Let this be a warning to us." Dr. Kaftan, once general superintendent of Schleswig-Holstein, since retired, only in 1930 writes in a superior vein regarding the "activities of the Missouriians," but deposes that for him "there would be no purpose in discussing theological matters with them."

Indeed, the silence of German theologians regarding the Missouri Synod has been almost as eloquent as their speech. By a more or less formal agreement the theological reviewers have consistently ignored during the past sixty years all theological products of our Church. Dr. Stoekhardt's *Commentary on Romans* received no notice whatsoever. Nor did A. L. Graebner's *Geschichte der Lutherschen Kirche Nordamerikas*. Nor Dr. Pieper's *Dogmatik*. Theologically the Missouri Synod does not exist. It has not adopted the "scientific" method of modern theology and of Biblical criticism. It may be ignored by a consensus of scholarship.

## II.

A pharisaic separatism — this is the common characterization of the Missouri Synod in the literature of the other American Lutheran church-bodies. It was a very friendly critic that wrote in the *Lutheran Church Review* of 1916:

"All too frequently Missouri has displayed a spirit very nearly akin to that of sectarianism. . . . Somehow it seems as though a little of the spirit of self-righteousness were in the air and that such captious criticism must be the outcome of a desire to discover a mote if possible. It is a spirit that has usually been regarded as characteristic of the sects. . . . It is this arrogant spirit, the presumption that it speaks as the mouthpiece and legislator for all the Church, that is the second great hindrance in the way of Lutheran unity."

Another good friend of Missouri, Dr. Abrahamson, the venerable editor of *Augustana*, official paper of the Swedish Synod, has said: "We regard the oft-repeated judgments of the Missouriians over the other Lutheran synods in this country as uncalled for and uncharitable. They might look after other opponents against whom to direct their sharp weapons than the Lutheran synods in this country. . . . If a synod or an individual person tries to represent itself as better than others, this, for thinking people, begins to look like self-glorification. Missouri should not continue its exclusivism with reference to other Lutheran synods because it does not agree with the spirit of Christ and the command of love."

"All except Missouri" — has become a stock phrase in the reporting of general Lutheran affairs. *Augustana* remarks: "All the various synods will readily endorse the Lutheran Brotherhood — except Missouri of course (*Missouri-synoden naturligtvis undantagen*)."

We support the work of the separated churches in Finland. This gave *Augustana* occasion to say: "It is this Missouriian exclusivism that we regret, as it utters itself in loveless and harsh judgments over such as are as good Lutherans as they are." (This, because of judgments expressed by Professor Dau on the state church of Finland.)

Once again *Augustana*, 1924, p. 568: "The Missouri Synod is known for its exclusive stand against other Lutheran organizations in this country."

In a personal letter of one of the theologians of the Buffalo Synod (1920) these words occur: "I have invariably had the experience that Missouri takes pleasure in meeting others with the greatest degree of coolness and aloofness. This may be unintentional, but it is characteristic."

The *Kirchenblatt* (Iowa) has traced this type of Lutheranism to the influence of Dr. Walther: "Not only has Walther left upon his synod the stamp of intolerance, but he has also led it upon the dangerous path of Calvinistic views on conversion and election. And in these things the disciples follow their master and surpass him."

This might lead us to quote voluminously from Ohio and Iowa Synod, Norwegian, and Augustana papers on the charge of Calvinism raised against our position in the doctrines just mentioned. But these accusations are too well known as to require more than mention in this connection. Referring to Grosse's *Unterscheidungslehren*, the *Lutheran* reviewer said: "The Law is more congenial to it than the Gospel. We would expect it thus in Calvin." In an editorial of September 6, 1923, Dr. Abrahamson of the Augustana Synod said that he has a high regard for certain friends of his in the Missouri Synod in spite of their "exclusivism" and although he could not "entirely subscribe to the doctrine of election which some of its leading men have promulgated during the recent decades." Even Dr. Joseph Stump, one of the most conservative theologians of the U. L. C., in a review of Dr. Walther's *Law and Gospel*, said, February 7, 1930, in the *Lutheran*: "It is a pity that Dr. Walther deemed it necessary to drag in here and there his peculiar doctrine of predestination."

The same paper describes our body as follows: "When a synod for seventy-five years emphasizes separateness, hero-worship, and hyperholiness, it must continually build higher and stronger fences about its membership to keep them." (1924.) This reminds us of the *Lutheran Observer's* (General Synod) reference to Concordia Seminary as "a school of theology famed for its savage orthodoxy and its large attendance."

We have been consistently pictured as standing for an unchristian separatism, as when the *Lutheran Standard* (Ohio) referred as late as 1930 pointedly to synods which "refuse to recognize certain other synods as Lutheran unless these others accept their method of presenting Biblical truth as the only method permissible in the Lutheran Church."

Sometimes the critics will launch into rather bitter polemics, as when the *Lutheran* said in 1911 in a discussion of church union: —

"We do not clamor for a fellowship even among Lutherans that rests on sentiment rather than on faith. But what we deplore is the absolutism that accompanies the interpretation of Missouri's doctrine of aloofness. It has practically become both an ecclesiastical and a religious cult and has the standing of a fundamental article in the creeds. It is so particularistic and exclusive as virtually to shut the door to Lutheran union in the future. For one Lutheran body to say to another: 'I will have nothing to do with you until we agree doctrinally, even to the dotting of the i and the crossing of the t,' is to render doctrinal unity impossible. Even where it is not wrong, as a correspondent puts it, 'to refuse official and church-fellowship until agreement in faith and practise is truly reached,' it is wrong for those who do thus refuse simply to abide in the superiority of their refusal and make no attempt, except by hard words and sneers, to bring Lutherans in error to conviction of the truth. It also is wrong to misrepresent those with whom we differ and wrong to enter as wolves in sheep's clothing into other people's folds."

A writer in the *Lutheran* who is laboring as missionary

at Tampa, Fla., justifies the founding of a U. L. C. congregation in that town by saying: "Lutheranism has been misrepresented here for nearly forty years by a little independent Missouri Synod church." In the A. L. C. paper *Kirchenblatt* (September 3, 1932) Rev. H. Krause reports that in a certain out-of-the-way town in Texas by the name of The Grove, "the Missourians have strong representation." He continues: "Some years ago they built a real neat church. One of my members was present at the dedication. He remarked, however, that the prayer of the pastor had not pleased him. It made the impression as if the kingdom of heaven consisted only of Missourians, and so the prayer was in the style of that man in the Temple who said: 'I thank Thee, God, that I am not like other people.' We have met peculiar people here; though, of course, we would not hold Missouri responsible for them." While the U. L. C. correspondent from Florida offers no explanation of his statement that Missouri "misrepresented" Lutheranism before he came, the A. L. C. correspondent at least is specific in charging our pastor with pharisaism in a dedication prayer.

*Folkebladet*, the organ of the Norwegian Free Church (Minneapolis), in its issue of December 30, 1931, discusses the three main divisions of Lutheranism in the United States and has this to say about the Missouri Synod: "It, of course, takes the same position as formerly, until a new generation will take the helm, a new generation with a wider spiritual horizon and more Christianity."

The *Lutheran* of April 6, 1922, quotes from the *American Lutheran* some remarks on the impressive ugliness of many Missouri Synod churches, "which resemble town halls more than ecclesiastical buildings and possess no form or furniture symbolizing liturgies and indicating sanctuaries." Next the editor quotes a review in the *American Lutheran*

of two pamphlets published by the U. L. C.'s Committee on Church Architecture: "Is it not strange that these most remarkable pamphlets [the ones on architecture] come from a body other than ours? With all the stress that our Missouri Synod lays on sound principles, we think she should lead the way when it comes to honest principles in church-building." This gives the Lutheran editor an occasion for the following bitter reflections on the Missouri Synod:—

"To this query there is an obvious reply, and sooner than abandon our brother we will answer his question. It is *not* strange that the principles held by Missouri should produce no architectural features in their church-buildings. Architecture involves beauty, gracefulness, adaptation, sympathy, and symbolism. It develops curves, and shades, shadows, high lights, and decorations. It abominates wearying hardness, puncturing pinnacles, and deadly fixation of lines and boundaries. A group that prides itself on its isolation, which boasts of its narrowed and unprogressive tenets, which will not join 'a body other than ours' to say even 'Our Father,' may employ, but it cannot produce, architecture. The whole world would need reshaping by such principles. It should be a cube and not a sphere. The rich and varied colors of clouds and twilights must be resolved into blacks and whites. The trees which the Infinite Architect empowered to throw out twigs and tendrils, leaves multiform in size and color, would need to appear in one deadly and ever-recurring model. No, it is not strange."

The charge which our South American workers continually meet is that the Missouri Synod Lutherans are only advance agents for American manufacturers. They are preparing the way for American radio sets, typewriters, and the soap that "preserves that schoolgirl complexion." Under the guise of religion they are drummers for the big Yankee factories. And people believe this rot, so that our South American editors must answer the charge every second and fourth Tuesday of the month. One would not think that our opponents in Germany descended to the

same level; but we find that Prussian Lutherans in their Berlin *Messenger* accuse us of having drawn under our influence, "by means of the dollar," the Lutheran Balts, who "first had intended to join the Prussian Church." This is absolutely untrue. Yet the article is being reprinted in many German journals. How much the writer knows about our work in general is evident when in the next sentence he says that our missionaries are "going from house to house among the laboring men of Berlin, distributing *Lehre und Wehre* among them to win them for our Church." Readers who remember *Lehre und Wehre* (a learned, theological periodical) can appreciate the joke.

The *Evangelische Zeitschrift*, organ of the Albrechtsbrueder, refers to the Missouri Synod as "the most intolerant Lutheran synod in America, which is opposed to all progress and regards the word of Luther as highly as the word of Paul. They call the various denominations sects and hate and condemn them almost like Satan himself. They keep their people in ignorance by warning against all communion with those who teach otherwise. The synod rules over the people as Rome does over its adherents. The new generation, born and reared in this country, will not permit themselves so to be ruled." The following commendation, however, is added: "We believe the Missouri Synod has a mission; she keeps thousands of German and Lutheran immigrants from infidelity, and in this we rejoice."

The *Magazin fuer Ev. Theologie und Kirche* of the former Evangelical Synod discusses verbal inspiration and quotes a sentence from Dr. Pfothenauer's address delivered at the dedication of Concordia Seminary. Its comment is: "The Church will either have to say with President Pfothenauer: 'We hold fast to the doctrine of verbal inspiration,' or it will have to say: 'We acknowledge the need of the his-

torical, critical method.' This method is used in our seminary, and we rejoice in it, since that sponsored by Pfoth-hauer to-day is absolutely untenable."

The (Methodist) *Advance* classifies the Lutherans as "quite as aloof as the Episcopalians." Indeed, the editorial continues: "The Lutherans are not at present a factor in the question of church union. They stand, for the most part, frankly aloof, making no pretense of favoring the reunion of Christendom. They are divided, as the Episcopalians are, and their several synods waste little love on each other. The Missouri Synod, for instance, will not commune with certain other Lutheran synods. But they have at least this element of consistency, that they make no pretense of non-sectarianism. They are sectarians, and they know it, and we all know it, and there is nothing more to be said about it." (March 12, 1914.)

In its issue of July 22, 1926, the *Christian Century* (Modernist) made this reference to our body: —

"The Missouri Lutheran Church has its strength in the Middle West, and its large theological seminary is in St. Louis, Mo. It represents a distinctively American development in Lutheranism, for which there is practically no parallel in Europe. It has isolated itself from other churches with an effectiveness which may be equaled by the Southern Baptists, but is not surpassed by any other body. Its discipline is iron, and it enforces conformity to a theology which may best be described as an ossified seventeenth-century orthodoxy. Its conception of salvation is highly magical, and the instruments of redemption are the Sacraments and 'pure doctrine.' Like Catholicism it perpetuates itself through the parochial school. The rigid discipline of the Church seems to be under the control of the theological-seminary faculty, which has become a kind of corporate pope. Curiously enough anti-Catholic feeling runs very high in this denomination, which is, in many of its characteristics, more closely akin to Catholicism than any other Protestant body, not excepting Anglicanism. The denomination has had a remarkable growth in America and numbers almost a million communicants. It has the missionary energy



which unqualified denominational zeal always supplies. Its social influence upon American life is very slight, and its ministers are prevented by the many restrictions which hedge them about from assuming positive social leadership in the various communities where they labor. The Church is almost as rigid and unbending as Rome, and it consciously isolates itself from the other portions of American Protestantism."

Notice how the old charges are here repeated: Our theology is referred to as "ossified seventeenth-century orthodoxy." The St. Louis Seminary faculty "has become a kind of corporate pope." Our faculty is said to enforce a "rigid discipline." The pastors of our Synod are represented as "hedged about by many restrictions."

### III.

A General Council paper, *Pilger durch Welt und Kirche*, said many years ago:—

"Had not the Missouri Synod clung so tenaciously to the confession of the pure doctrine; had she not so trenchantly testified and fought against all and every departure from the path she recognized as the right one; had she shown herself more yielding in practise than in doctrine; had she accommodated herself to the viewpoint of our fluid age, she would never have attained that which she now can call her own. She has taken her reason captive under the obedience of Christ, and the Lord has rewarded her for it. She regards the glory of God, the pure truth of the Word as expressed in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, to be higher than the favor of the world and higher than human opinion. Had not the Lord taken pity on the Lutheran Church of America by placing the Missouri Synod in her midst, we should to-day be an insignificant body, Lutheran perhaps in name, but otherwise the stamping-ground for foxes and other wild things. When I consider what the grace of God has done through the Missourians, I cannot join the discordant chorus against them. My conviction is that the Missourians ascribe their success not to their flesh, but to the mercy of God. God bless these brave Saxons and cause their salt to work mightily in the leaven of American Lutheranism!"

F. Uhlhorn says in his *History*: "The fact is that the

greatest gain the Lutheran Church of America made came by reason of the firm and immovable stand men took, against unionism and Liberalism, for the old Lutheran faith. The first result indeed was division after division, but in the end their determined confessionalism yielded blessed gain. Synod after synod placed itself, with varying degrees indeed of insight and consistency, on the platform of the Symbols." And J. L. Neve, in his *History*: "The close unity [of Missouri], coupled with its size, exercised a powerful influence on those without, strengthening, especially in the Eastern synods, the already awakened confessional consciousness." Charles P. Krauth: "I have been saddened beyond expression by the bitterness displayed towards the Missourians. . . . They have been our benefactors. . . . Their work has been of inestimable value."

That our doctrine is Christian and soundly Lutheran no one will deny. Unprejudiced opponents, also in the past, have not denied it. Rudolf Hoffmann explained "the Missourian power" thus: "The simple Christian wants no uncertain, wavering stand in matters of faith; he wants a firm foundation. . . . The Missourians are Lutherans in the full sense of the word. They resist all unionism; and well they may, for this constitutes the strength of their synod."

In 1886 Professor Dr. Graul addressed a Prussian conference, relating his impressions of America. Concerning the Missouri Synod he said: "They are the ones who have first made Americans aware of the fact that there is a Lutheran Church; who have generated in the native Lutheran Church a desire not only to bear the Lutheran name, but to be what the name signifies."

Professor Pfeleiderer, in 1881, printed some outrageous untruths about us in his *Amerikanische Reisebilder*, to which I have referred in a previous section. But he admits

the "testimony of divine blessing," and page 159 he explains it thus: "A special divine blessing rests upon them. Other foundation no man can lay than that is laid, Jesus Christ. And this foundation the Missourians have. No one can deny that."

Writing in *Decorah Posten* (Norwegian), Rev. J. O. Hougen said August 13, 1926: "Yesterday I attended a mission-festival conducted outdoors by the Missourians. I got acquainted with all the ministers present and their wives. We discussed religious conditions in general, also the activities of our different bodies. The Missouri Synod does thorough and reliable church-work and does not permit herself to be affected by conditions or by new and untried methods. She stands immovably firm upon the old, tested Lutheran church principles. She is—in spite of differing opinions—the strongest bulwark of the Lutheran Church in this country against Romanism, Liberalism, unionism, indifferentism, and all other unsound isms."

In 1919 the *Wachende Kirche* (Buffalo Synod) editorially discussed the Missouri Synod as follows:—

"From certain directions stubbornness, self-will, and unyielding resistance have been charged against the Missouri Synod because it did not participate in the Chicago Conference. Also we should have liked to have seen this synod represented on account of its positive position and its influence, and we believe that it could have done this without compromise or other damage. The Missouri Synod thought otherwise. The question cannot well be argued, as it is always perilous to act against conscience. Also this should be recognized and should be publicly stated: Missouri has never separated herself from other synods, but other synods have separated from her. The reasons are well known. They hold water as little as the reasons why Missouri stays away from the undertakings of the National Lutheran Council. But now Missouri is expected to heal a damage which it has not caused. Can one really expect this? Let us not forget history and try to attain to just opinions. Consider the case of our synod. Missouri did not sever connections with us, but we sev-

ered connections with Missouri, and that in a manner which makes it impossible for Missouri to join us in any undertaking. To remain on our standpoint and at the same time blame Missouri for declining any approach is an inconsistency to say the least. On the other hand, if the judgment pronounced by us upon Missouri is still correct, any attempt to approach our synod would be in defiance of a Bible principle; if our former judgment no longer is justified, then also this should be expressed, and thereby an obstacle to cooperation would be removed. Let all of us pray and labor that no synod may have reason to separate herself from others."

The *Lutheran Quarterly* for April, 1915, then published by members of the General Synod, discussed the ecclesiastical position of the Lutheran Church and in characterizing the various bodies had this to say: "Perhaps I ought to attempt to make clear here the divisions among even Lutheran bodies along these lines. There are those who would only have fellowship if they were convinced of agreement in all points of doctrine given in the Bible. This is Missouri's position, and in loyalty to the Scriptures they must make one respect and honor them, even though one may think the lines have been made too narrow by them."

In a discussion of Missouri Synod statistics for 1922 Dr. Abrahamson (September 6, 1923) complains of the "suspicions" of leading men and ministers generally of the Missouri Synod who do not regard the Swedish synod as orthodox — "an undeserved criticism because we are just as orthodox as our Missourian friends." But then he continues: "In spite of its extreme exclusivism the Missouri Synod challenges our admiration. We admire the great work that it has accomplished. It is the most solid block of Lutherans in this country. It has succeeded in retaining what we have failed in: the Christian day-school, a source of great strength; they reject definitely all Modernism, and their ministers preach the Word of God; they insist upon

it that the Church shall limit her work to her God-given sphere and not mix in civil affairs; in the doctrine of salvation it stresses the Lutheran-Christian principle that men are not saved by reform, but by faith in Christ. Much else we could mention as a reason for the high opinion we have about this synod: its powerful and well-directed activity must appeal to all friends of our Church."

Dr. Abrahamson, in *Augustana*, March 26, 1925, found fault, as we have seen, with the activity of our Church in Finland, but added this remark: "In conclusion let me say that there is much that we venerate about the Missouri Synod — its energetic work in all branches, its educational work in particular, its protest against the lodge religion, its opposition to unionism, its refusal to make compromises, and its free confession of the Lutheran faith. We of the Augustana Synod shall gladly welcome the day when all misunderstanding between us and the Missourians have been removed." I have already quoted Pastor Le Seur, who was dumbfounded that such a tree should grow out of Luther's sowing. Yet he gives us this testimonial: "Justice compels me to say that within the Missouri Synod there is extremely active church-life and splendid liberality, such as, for instance, is evidenced in its fostering care of German Lutheran schools."

The *Lutherisches Kirchenblatt*, organ of the General Synod, said (Vol. 24, p. 109): "The Missouri Synod is one of the strongest Lutheran bodies in the country. It is almost altogether German and has its strength in the West. In activity and missionary interest it is surpassed by none. In its unity and compactness it is to be compared with no other. Its pronounced trait is the emphasis on pure doctrine, its generous support of synodical institutions and of the parochial school, and its strict application of church discipline."

In the latest expressions of U. L. C. quarters the note of unkind criticism is not heard. I refer to Dr. J. L. Neve's *History of the Lutheran Church in America* (1934). Regarding Dr. Walther the author says that his articles in the *Lutheraner* "caused many to realize that the historical platform of Lutheranism had been abandoned" (in the General Synod). The "newly arrived Lutherans in New York and Missouri" strengthened the conservative party in the General Synod. Professor Sprecher is quoted as saying that he had once regarded a liberal Lutheranism as a practical modification of our Creed, but that "an increased knowledge of the spirit, methods, and literature of the Missouri Synod has convinced me that such alterations are undesirable." Neve expresses regret that "the Eastern and older synods could not attain" the "genuine Lutheran practise" to the degree demanded by the Western synods. Once more: "The imposing unity of the Missouri Synod, together with its size, — for it soon grew to be the largest Lutheran synod, — exerted a mighty influence everywhere and especially in the Eastern synods strengthened the confessional consciousness which had already awakened from its slumber." (Pp. 91. 95. 118. 160. 186.)

Even in Germany, opinions are now placed on record which may be balanced against the bitter subjective criticisms that once were the rule. The *Vossische Zeitung* of October 21, 1927, published an article on the Missouri Synod which tells the story of the Saxon immigration and pictures its growth to more than a million and property worth a hundred million dollars —

"all built up on the basis of a church constitution which is probably the most liberal in the world. The individual congregation is altogether sovereign, the central management simply functioning for administration, not through power. There are no fixed contributions demanded. There is an absolute lack of rules and prescriptions, making so much more admirable the results that

have been achieved. In doctrinal demands the synod is anything but liberal. With a strictness that to us has become incomprehensible and with unshaken confidence the Lutheran Confessions are upheld. These Lutherans stand without discussion on the Word of Holy Scripture, which is inspired line by line. There is no fellowship between liberal church-bodies and the Missouri Synod. It is orthodox and without yielding one jot stands to-day on the Augsburg Confession of 1530 and on the Formula of Concord of 1577. When I heard of the pioneer existence which most pastors are obliged to lead during their early years in office, I was often reminded of the Apostolic Age, in which the apostles, despite all hardships, carried their doctrine to the limits of the then-known world."

Somewhat negative in its statements, but not altogether hostile is the following from the article "Lutherans" (by Rev. Charles M. Jacobs, D. D.) in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (14th edition, Vol. 14, 500): "The most conservative type of American Lutheranism is represented by the Synodical Conference. Its theological standards are those of the seventeenth-century orthodoxy; it strongly opposes any recognition of, or cooperation with, other churches, and it is vigorously hostile to the membership of its pastors and people in secret societies. The United Lutheran Church, though insistent upon the enforcement of confessional standards, is less rigid both in theology and practise." More distinctly favorable is the opinion recorded by Dr. A. B. Wentz in his *The Lutheran Church in American History*: "The entire membership of the Missouri Synod is stoutly loyal to the principles of the Synodical Conference. The laymen have begun to enlist in the active work of the Church. New methods of work are being constantly devised. Larger resources are being placed at the service of the general Church. Modern methods of publicity and business administration are coming to be applied. And this new spirit of enterprise among the Missourians, together with their rapid growth in numbers, expansion in territory,

their contagious enthusiasm for purity of doctrine, their constant emphasis on thorough educational methods, and their relatively large supply of ministerial candidates make this branch of the Lutheran Church in our country one of the most vigorous elements in American Christianity."

Such experiences as those of one of our young pastors in 1931 who was in correspondence with an Episcopal Father of the Society of the Oblates of Mount Calvary (Order of the Holy Cross) are now not uncommon. The Episcopalian wrote: "Last Saturday when I was boarding a train, a very fine-looking man came up to me and began a conversation. He turned out to be a pastor of the Norwegian Church. In the course of our discussion I said to him, 'You know, about two years ago I heartily disliked the Lutherans; but I have a friend, a member of the Missouri Synod, who has changed all that.' He said, 'So? They won't have anything to do with us.' I replied, 'I can't blame them. I admire them for holding firmly and unequivocally to what they believe to be the true doctrine. In these times of agnosticism it has a real religious value and must be a source of much consolation to their people.'"

Our own correspondence does not rarely contain expressions like this from Dr. Luther Roth of the U. L. C.: "Allow me to state that my admiration of the vigorous, manly, clear, and convincing manner in which you take your positions, hold and defend them, on the lodge, parochial school, and similar vital questions increases with every issue of the paper. In God's name carry on! May His blessing ever attend you!" Or again: "God bless you and your Synod, which is a true exponent of confessional Lutheranism."

In 1918 the *Lutheran* pointed to the history of the Missouri Synod as a story from which "the Lutheran Church gets probably its biggest example of how to build up an



educational and church organization. . . . Let us try to grasp this phenomenon. In 1839 about 1,000 foreign-speaking members, one log cabin in the backwoods, seven students for the ministry when the cabin doors swung open the first time, practically no money or friends, which within eighty years increased to 800,000 members and fifteen good schools, without a financial whirlwind spasm; no endowment worth mentioning beyond the endowment of a willing and instructed pastorate and people. Now, brethren, let us all join in the chorus." Some years previously the *Lutheran World* (May 31, 1911), commenting on the centennial celebration of Dr. Walther's birth, quoted with approval the *Lutheran* to this effect: "This celebration proves that there is a remarkable *esprit de corps* in that sturdy body of Lutherans, whose positiveness and definiteness in matters of faith and practise are its most valuable asset," — although the old note rang through when the article continued thus: "This is not saying that we could not heartily wish there were less inclination in this great body to refuse even the semblance of fellowship with other Lutherans who love the Confessions just as truly as they and who defend the faith and bear witness in its behalf far more wisely. Definiteness is all right, but particularism and exclusiveness toward Lutherans who confess the faith and defend it is all wrong, as the Lutheran Church is learning to its sorrow."

In this connection a little-known characterization of Dr. Walther, which appeared in 1887 in the (General Council) *Lutheran*, is worth reprinting: —

"The Missouri Synod has sustained a loss such as no other body of Lutherans could have sustained. This one man had a place among them such as no other body ever gave to a man. We give them praise for their ability to appreciate the transcendent ability of their spiritual father, teacher, and leader and for the loyalty they displayed towards him.

"He stood out among all Lutherans in America as the man who had the greatest number of enthusiastic followers and, on the other hand, as the man who called forth the most violent opposition and denunciation.

"Great as his gifts and acquirements were, he was fortunate in being surrounded from the beginning with materials which, if not altogether homogeneous, were easily made so. Having secured such a following at the beginning, he attracted sympathetic adherents from Germany and all parts of this country and managed to mold this growing body in accordance with his own convictions. It would have been impossible for him to accomplish these things except in a body that was almost exclusively German. Even his surpassing gifts would have failed to make a Missouri of the mixed elements of the East, especially where the influence of the English language and of American surroundings are more keenly felt.

"Although some have accused him of seeking above all things the aggrandizement and growth of the Missouri Synod, it must not be forgotten that, if he had really been ambitious in this direction, he might have accomplished more by being less of a theological inquirer and disputant. His keen theological mind constantly impelled him to investigate and to discuss theological points and to promote doctrinal discussion, and this very tendency moved him to take positions at variance with those of other parts of the Lutheran Church, in Europe and America, and the result has been that the Missouri Synod and the Synodical Conference, in sustaining him, have to a large extent separated themselves from the rest of the Lutheran Church.

"We do not think that we are saying too much when we assert that, if Dr. Walther had avoided some of these positions, and if the Missouri Synod, under his guidance, had displayed greater moderation, charity, and practical good sense, it would have been able to unite in one organization the greater part of the German Lutheran Church of this country. Professor Walther had the learning, the eloquence, the high and unselfish character which might have made him the Bismarck of a united German Lutheran Church of America; but there were certain elements in his nature that rendered this impossible.

"But for all that we desire, in the name of the English-speaking Lutherans of this country, to give this public testimony to the character, profound learning, and noble services of this

distinguished man, whose efforts in behalf of a true Lutheranism have been felt throughout our land and elsewhere and in all the languages which the Lutheran churches use. While not a few things that have made Missourianism distasteful to other Lutherans may be ascribed to the zeal of some of his followers, who went beyond their master, we believe that all that is best in Missouri and for which Lutherans of this and future generations will bless it is owing to the influence of Dr. Walther more than to any other man."

In a notable article which appeared in the *Watchman-Examiner* (Baptist) a short time after Dr. Walther's death and in which his character and his work are described, the closing sentence reads as follows: "In church matters Dr. Walther preferred ideas to organization, the Gospel to institutions, the truth to numbers, and obscurity to world-fame."

In the *Lutheran* of September 28, 1922, Dr. G. H. Trabert, veteran U. L. C. clergyman, describes a visit forty years ago to the leader of the Missouri Synod. This was in July, 1881, when Trabert's journey took him to St. Louis: —

"My object was to get into touch with the head of the Missouri Synod, Dr. C. F. W. Walther; hence the Concordia Publishing House was first visited in order to ascertain whether he was in the city and when it would be most desirable to call on him. 'Yes, he is at home and lives at —, but do not call until about 2 o'clock, as he generally takes an afternoon nap.' About 2 o'clock I rang the bell, which was answered by Mrs. Walther. She took my card, and presently the Doctor appeared with the card in his hand. I told him that I only desired to make a friendly call, as that was my first visit to St. Louis. He grasped my hand, saying, 'That pleases me; come in.' He took me into his study and insisted on my sitting in his study chair. Then, reaching for a jar with cigars, he said, 'Do you smoke?' As I was then accustomed to the weed, I thanked him for the cigar. He then put some tobacco in a pipe with a stem about a yard long, then, striking a match, he first lit my cigar and then his pipe, and settled himself in the corner of a convenient couch. In the mean

time Mrs. Walther appeared at the door, and the Doctor whispered, 'Coffee.' Presently two cups of coffee appeared, and the interview began. The doctor was a most congenial personage, with large, penetrating eyes, which seemed to pierce into your soul. He began by asking about the Church in Pennsylvania and showed a most intimate knowledge of Eastern church affairs. That year the Ministerium had elected Dr. J. A. Seip<sup>13)</sup> president. Now, Dr. Seip was at the time editor of the *Lutheran* and sometimes severely criticized the Missourians. Besides, he had some peculiar views on the Apocalypse. In view of this, Dr. Walther remarked: 'But the Pennsylvania Synod elected Dr. Seip its president!' 'Yes,' I replied; 'the Germans and German-English element has for years had the choice of the president, so this year the purely English portion thought it proper to put an absolutely English representative in the chair, inasmuch as the president is only a moderator.' 'Then,' he replied, 'it was either unionism or church politics; for Dr. Seip is a fanatical chiliast, and whenever he can give us a cut, he does it.' I replied, 'It was a matter of policy, that is all.' The interview was most friendly, during which the coffee gradually disappeared.

"After he was through with his questioning, it became my turn. It was just at the beginning of the great predestination controversy. I therefore said, 'Doctor, is it not sad that this predestination controversy has developed?' He replied, 'Sad, sad, sad! but' (raising his finger significantly) 'let those give an account who started it. For three years we submitted to be attacked, but now, if they want war, they shall have it.' This ended the interview, as he would not be drawn farther into the discussion of the subject.

"My cigar was finished, and the cups were empty, so I arose to withdraw, but volunteered some information. I said: 'The General Council is contemplating beginning English Home Mission work in the Northwest, in Minneapolis and vicinity.' 'If you do that,' he said, 'only send a good Lutheran there. If you send a good Lutheran, you will find us to be your best friends; but if you do not send a good Lutheran, you will find us the worst of enemies.' I replied, 'You can be sure that only a good Lutheran will be sent.' Little did I then think that two years later I would be doing English missionary work in Minneapolis; and I was

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13) This must be a misprint for Seiss. — G.

always on good terms with the Missourians. I bade farewell to Dr. Walther, and he said, 'I want to make this request, that, if you ever come to St. Louis again, you pay me another visit.' I promised to do so, but he had passed away before I again had the privilege of getting there; nevertheless I made it a point to call on his successor, Dr. Pieper."

Sometimes representatives of the other Lutheran bodies visit our conventions and place their impressions on record. Reporting the convention at Chicago in 1914, a correspondent of the General Synod wrote in *Lutheran Church Work*:—

"This is the largest Lutheran body in the United States and is the best-organized and most powerful body. The German language is used throughout. There is evident a spirit of intense interest, which is characteristic of the German everywhere. Here is a wonderful example of church loyalty. The organization in the Missouri Synod is perhaps no less effective than that of the Roman Church. The Missouri Synod pastor is a man with authority, and he, in turn, is a man under authority. Recently some of the leaders in the Missouri Synod have shown a willingness to recognize and cooperate more fully with Lutherans of other synods. That is one of the things to be prayed for. If the strength of this great body could be joined with that of the other great Lutheran bodies, the Lutheran Church could do a work in America and through America for the world which has not been equaled since the days of the apostles. Let us pray for unity and united influence throughout our Church."

A contributor to the *Lutheran Observer* said:—

"One thing was very apparent to the observer, and that was the absence of any manifestation of sacerdotalism. There seemed to be a perfect equality of rights and privileges between ministers and laity. There was no distinction of dress to distinguish the clergy from the laymen. Not one, from the dignified presiding officer down to the last preacher, wore the clerical jacket. There was nothing in that vast company to remind you of any separate order of priesthood. The only reminder of medievalism was the high altar, with its candles and the crucifix. [!] How such an image over the altar can be reconciled with the First Commandment is a mystery to some of us. The cross is a beautiful and

suggestive symbol; but when you hang an image on the cross and bow down to it, you violate the commandment of God."

Recording his impression of our 1917 convention at Milwaukee, a visitor wrote in the *Lutheran*: "The English leaven is working and leavening the whole lump. Keen leaders are being developed, men who understand the catch words *efficiency* and *publicity*. At Milwaukee, 1917, the Missouri Synod 'arrived' as an American church-body, to be reckoned with by the whole continent."

When the Synod met in Fort Wayne in 1923, a contributor to the *Lutheran* said: "The Missouri Synod is an aggressive body, energetic and eager to do a large work in America. One felt much at home, as many of the same problems discussed by the United Lutheran Church were considered by these folks also. Nor was it as stiff a proceeding as a non-Missourian might think; humorous remarks were frequent, and many times a ripple of laughter went over the audience."

Sometimes members of other bodies visit our conferences, and their impressions seem to be not altogether unfavorable. Dr. T. F. Dornblaser visited our New Orleans conference in 1916 and tells about his observations in the *Lutheran Church Work and Observer* of November 30. "You cannot," he concludes, "help but admire the convictions of these men and the sacrifice they are willing to make for conscience' sake, although you may question in some things the correctness of their judgment. Taking it all in all, it was one of the most enjoyable occasions of my life. I ate and drank with the brethren, and, I suppose, would also have smoked with them if it did not make me so awfully sick."

During the same year the venerable Dr. G. U. Wenner of New York City, writing under the name "Germanicus" in the same periodical (December 28), reports his first

visit to St. Louis. He met Professors Pieper, Bente, Fuerbringer, and Dau and says: —

"It was most gratifying to attend such a free conference and to exchange frank expressions of opinion on matters of preeminent interest in the Lutheran Church.

"On the following morning, in response to a gracious invitation, I visited the seminary and attended four of the lectures. When Professor Pieper introduced me to his class, two hundred stalwart young men rose and greeted me. It was the finest body of young men I have ever seen together in America. Altogether the students of Concordia number 353. No one is admitted unless he has been graduated from a college, and no one can be graduated unless he is master of both German and English. Forty per cent. of the students are sons of ministers. 'Our ministers get small salaries, and their families know what privation means, but the sons are proud to follow in the footsteps of their fathers in the ministry,' was the statement of one of the professors. You may recall the proud boast ascribed to Professor Pieper that, if a thousand additional ministers were required, they could doubtless be obtained within a reasonable time from their parochial schools.

"In Professor Pieper's lecture I noticed that five languages were used with startling fluency. In another room I attended an examination in philosophy. The answers had to be written on the spot, and the papers had to be handed in at the close of the hour. Apparently the work was very thorough."

Later Dr. Wenner visited Mr. Theo. Lange.

"Other guests who had been invited to this Sunday dinner were Pastor Schmidt and his wife, Professor Pieper and his wife, and Professor Dau and his wife. I am afraid we talked shop at the table, but the ladies graciously assured us that they were accustomed to such conversation and that no apology was needed. Before, during, and after the dinner we discussed with zeal the things that lie close to the thinking of all who have at heart the interests of the Lutheran Church of America. It was worth while crossing the Mississippi to form the acquaintance of such distinguished representatives of one of our greatest synods and to obtain at first hand a presentation of their attitude and point of view. I appreciated their courtesy and bade them farewell with high regard and genuine affection."

## OUR LITURGICAL CHAOS.

### I.

A liturgy is a collection of prescribed forms for public worship. The Roman and Greek Catholic churches are liturgical churches. The Anglican Church is liturgical as well as the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. The Lutheran Church has during its entire history cultivated a service with prescribed forms for prayers, responses, versicles, and other elements of joint worship. Of the congregations of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States it may be affirmed that they have a liturgical form of public worship. But looking at the body as a whole and remembering that an essential mark of a liturgical church-body is uniformity, one hesitates to list the Missouri Synod among the liturgical churches. At the present day our congregations still possess in their German order of worship a set form which is followed with only slight variations everywhere. It is otherwise with our English services. The situation here can best be described in the phrase used at the head of this essay. We have liturgical chaos, a confusion which is not at the present time giving way to order and uniformity, but which is growing worse confounded.

While it is not the writer's purpose to indite a treatise on Lutheran liturgics nor even to treat with any detail the history of the order of worship in our own Synod, a few guide-lines of a historic nature will be necessary for the proper approach to our subject.

A new *Liturgy and Agenda* was offered to our Church by authority of the General Body in the summer of 1917. The thought of issuing a new book of worship was first suggested many years ago to the pastors of the English Synod of Missouri and Other States. They and their



congregations had largely come out of the German body just named in the period of transition from the use of the German to that of the English language. They had only a meager hymnological and liturgical literature, altogether inadequate for the increasingly varied needs of their growing organization. Individual pastors helped themselves by making translations from German books according as needs arose in their work, or borrowed material which appeared suitable to them from existing English liturgies. This was done, of course, at the sacrifice of uniformity. The desire to have a common ritual for all sacred acts of congregations and their ministers prompted the English Synod to collect liturgical material and to appoint a committee on liturgical forms and forms for ministerial acts. When the English Synod of Missouri had become the English District of the Missouri Synod, report was made to this latter body at its convention in Chicago, in 1914, that the manuscript for an English agenda had been completed and that publication might begin. The men who had labored on this manuscript were Dr. C. Abbetmeyer, Rev. H. Eckhardt, and Rev. G. Wegener. Synod referred the manuscript back to an enlarged committee, whose duty it was to be to examine carefully, and, if necessary, to revise, the manuscript and then to proceed with the publication. This work was completed 1915, 1916, and 1917. The committee which performed this work consisted of Profs. W. H. T. Dau and T. Graebner and the Revs. L. Buchheimer and J. H. C. Fritz. For three years this committee held almost weekly meetings in the faculty-room of Concordia Seminary. The entire text was read aloud, and changes were made either through immediate substitutions or alterations or by assignment of various sections to one or the other member of the committee. The work was done without remuneration.

When issued, the volume was received with general ap-

proval. A few omissions and inaccuracies were reported, and a second edition, the one now in use, was issued in 1921.

In causing this new liturgy to be printed, our Synod unquestionably intended to make possible a liturgical uniformity in our congregations in order that this element might be conserved during the transition from German into English. The men who labored upon this book certainly had nothing else in mind. If misgivings at time arose within them regarding the adoption of the complete Common Service through the length and breath of our Synod, no presentiment of the confusion which would characterize our liturgical status even fifteen years after the adoption of the new church-book ever entered their minds.

It is appropriate that we consider the historical justification not only for the forms and elements of the liturgical worship in the Lutheran Church, but of the Common Service in particular. It should be clear that in submitting the new agenda, nothing outlandish in a liturgical sense, nothing out of harmony with our Lutheran past, was being offered to the congregations. In matters of public worship the Lutheran Church is the most liberal of all churches. She insists upon those things which the Word of God shows to be essential. Yet she permits all of human origin that is edifying and that will contribute to the beauty and efficacy of worship. No binding rules are laid down as to what shall constitute the form and substance of public worship other than that the Gospel shall be preached in its purity and the Sacraments rightly administered. All forms and ceremonies that enter into worship are adiaphora and are recognized as such by our Lutheran Confessions. The reformers rightly hold (Augsburg Confession, Art. VII): "The Church is the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments rightly administered. As to the true unity of the Church, it is enough

to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites, and ceremonies instituted by men should be everywhere alike." But, on the other hand, the Confessions as emphatically teach that it is desirable that there should be unanimity in these matters. Again we quote: "It is pleasing to us that for the sake of unity and good order universal rites be observed." With this object in mind, the promoting of unity among the churches, as well as with the aim to lead the people back to the true principles of worship, Luther himself was the first to undertake to purify the service of the Church by revising the service then in use in his treatise *Of the Order of Divine Service in the Congregation* (1523) and, in the same year, in *Form of the Mass*. Following the efforts of Luther in this direction, theologians in the various cities and states of Germany prepared their own forms of service, giving expression to the renewed conception of worship, in which the preaching of the Gospel was again given the central place and the church song again came into its own.

Luther, in response to the continued urging of his friend Hausmann of Zwickau, issued late in the fall of 1523 his great order, the *Formula Missae* (Form of Mass and Communion). In the introduction he repeats that he does not desire to discontinue the traditional services, but to cleanse those that are in use of the impure additions, etc. It will be interesting to follow the order of parts of the Liturgy of Holy Communion as Luther here outlines them in what is the first great order of the Reformation, and to compare them with the liturgy of our *Agenda*. His liturgy begins with the Introit; then follow, in order, Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis, Collect, Epistle, Gradual, Gospel, Nicene Creed, Sermon, Salutation, Preface, including Proper Prefaces, Words of Institution, Sanctus and Hosanna, Elevation,

the Lord's Prayer, the Pax, Distribution, during which the *Agnus Dei* is sung, two short Collects, *Benedicamus*, and Aaronitic Benediction; he retained the Latin language except for the sermon. The only new introduction is the Aaronitic Benediction. It is strange to find Luther so hesitant and actually holding back in something in which he was deeply interested. Possibly it was because of his fear that a formal order of service might be regarded as authoritatively binding; for he emphasizes again and again that such things must be regarded as free, and he did not want to be considered as issuing something that others were either compelled to follow or to use unless it commended itself to them.

The early Lutheran Church, then, had practically every element of what is now our Common Service, and the emphasis on freedom in the adoption of a certain order was by no means intended to discourage uniformity. The Apology, chapter eight, urges that "for the sake of example all things in the churches might be done in order and becomingly." And again: "In the use of these matters the use of liberty is to be so controlled that the inexperienced may not be offended. Such public harmony as could indeed be produced without offense to conscience ought to be preferred to all other advantages."

Space is lacking even for a sketch of the changes which the Lutheran Order of Service underwent during the ages of Pietism and Rationalism. Not until about 1877 did Germany again have a pure Lutheran liturgy; the new liturgy of the state church of Sweden (1894) supplies the ancient Gregorian melodies for every part of the liturgy; the liturgy of the state church of Norway of 1920 comes nearer the original liturgics than any since the days before Rationalism; and it was in 1888 that American Lutherans first used the Common Lutheran Liturgy.

Once in a while we hear some one say: The more liturgical Lutheran church services resemble those of the Episcopal Church. Please note this reply: "The Lutheran revision of the service, issued in many editions, in many States and cities, had been fully tested by more than twenty years of continuous use before the revision made by the English Church, first issued in the *Prayer-book* of Edward VI, 1549." (Expl. of Common Service, Gen. Council, p. 13 ff.) English students of the Anglican liturgies have stated that the *Prayer-book* of Edward VI has not been improved upon. That *Prayer-book* resembles the Lutheran orders much more than the later orders of the Anglican Church.

## II.

We have both extremes, a High Church tendency towards ritualism and the ("Low Church") elimination of all liturgical features except Collect, Lord's Prayer, Benediction, and the responses of Amen; and we have all degrees between. The larger issue, the wide-spread antagonism to the Common Service, should be considered first. Essentially this antipathy to an elaborate Order of Service is fortified by reference to the undoubted fact that the Lutheran Church looks upon liturgy as an adiaphoron.

But while a definite form of order of the divine service is not commanded in Scripture, being left to Christian liberty, it is not a matter of indifference for that reason how the service is to be conducted. The apostle says: "Let all things be done decently and in order," 1 Cor. 14, 40; and again: "Let all things be done unto edifying," v. 26. The value of a liturgical service that really means something and expresses something in a plain way is beyond estimation. A liturgical service, because of its repetition every Sunday, will become part of a person's religious thought and expression. Our Lutheran liturgical service

contains such large quotations from the Bible that they become almost invaluable because of their educational value. In addition to this our Lutheran liturgy renders the acts of public service true acts of confession of faith. This is true especially of the Sunday morning worship in our Church. This order of service is a beautiful work of art, presenting a gradual climax of such wonderful dignity and impressiveness that the mere presence in such a service should result in edification. The service opens most appropriately with the confession of sins. Having been given the first assurance of the forgiveness of God in absolution, the believer enters into the Lord's presence. He is now greeted by the Introit of the day. It makes him acquainted with the special character and idea of the day, and he answers with the Gloria Patri, the confession of the co-eternal Godhead of our Lord and the Holy Ghost with the Father. In the Kyrie the church confesses the world's need of a Redeemer and then proclaims the provision of this need by the singing of the Gloria. The worshiper then joins with the entire congregation through the mouth of the pastor in the Collect, which serves to concentrate the thought on the Epistle and Gospel. After the sermon the congregation sings the Offertory, thereby accepting the doctrines that have been proclaimed and vowing faithfulness to the Lord with all their heart and soul. Follow the Benediction and the Doxology, dismissing the worshiper with a thankful heart for strength to live as it becometh a disciple of Christ, and, having received the blessing of the Lord, he praises Him from whom all blessings flow and goes back to his home rejoicing in the fruits of Christ's salvation.

These elements of the Lutheran worship are made sacred to us by the use of countless thousands who have voiced the deep religious fervor of their devotion in its

phrases since the earliest ages of the Christian Church. In a most satisfying way it presents the two elements of all true worship, the sacramental, in which God's grace is exhibited, offered, and bestowed, and the sacrificial, in which man offers to God the service which is due Him.

The question is sometimes raised whether constant use of the liturgy does not tend to monotony. Never, if properly rendered. There is much opportunity for variety in the rendition itself. Special collects and prayers may be used to suit special occasions. The General Prayer may be either that of the Common Service or one of those provided elsewhere or a free prayer. The litany may be used when occasion demands, or the suffrages may be used. Other methods of varying the service without doing violence to it suggest themselves.

The liturgical service does not prohibit the use of special numbers. We only need to remind ourselves of the cantatas of Bach. No doubt the use of proper anthems, quartets, and solo parts add greatly to the service if they are in harmony with the service and theme. (On this subject and on the related one of organ music another essay might be written as long as the present.) Special music should come between the Epistle- and the Gospel-lesson. Music at this place, sung after the Hallelujah or sentences for the day, serves the purpose of the gradual, which anciently was a psalm sung from the steps (*gradus*) of the pulpit or of the altar as a response to the Epistle-lesson. An anthem by the choir after the sermon is about as unliturgical as a thing can be. It creates a secondary climax and destroys the unity of the service. Besides, our interest in the forms of worship should not permit the principle to become obscured that the sermon, after all, is the chief thing. Everything should tend to prepare the mind for the message, and nothing should be permitted to

weaken the hold of the memory upon what has been heard. Anthems after the sermon have this distracting quality. They have a tendency to erase the lessons of the discourse from the memory of the worshipers.

We boast of being a singing Church. We do not give the singing of hymns over to the choir or to a paid quartet. We want all within our churches to open their mouths and sing. A liturgy helps us remain a singing Church. The antiphons, glorias, hallelujahs, salutations, all contribute to it. There is in the music of our Common Service real singable music for old and young. All are brought together through its strains and phrases into one song, one note that confesses, praises, and rejoices.

And there is merit in uniformity.

There should not be a change of service whenever there is a change of pastors. A member of the Norwegian Lutheran Church wrote in 1932: "Congregations are constantly learning and relearning a service. This ought not to be. It is hard enough to conduct one service well. Just as they are doing their finest, along comes another pastor and changes things. A new broom sweeps clean, it is true, but oftentimes that which is worth while is disregarded. Pastors are often tired of the phrase, 'The pastor we had before did this and did that.' 'Reverend So-and-so did not do as you do.' They cannot be told to 'forget it,' even though it be desirable. If we wish to eliminate much of this talk, let us all be the same with reference to our worship. Let us be uniform."

Uniformity of the order of service is necessary if we would make the casual visitor feel at home and join the congregation. The same Norwegian writer says: "Thousands of our people are constantly moving. We do not want to lose them to other churches. We want to hold them, they belong to us. We can make them feel at home,



feel like coming to our churches, if we are similar to their churches at home. If we have uniform services, they feel at home, get acquainted more easily, and are at rest."

Let us foster a complete liturgical service.

Let us have uniformity.

### III.

Martin Luther, on October 9, 1524, laid off his monkish garb and henceforth wore the gown or robe of the doctor, professor, or counselor in the public services. At the same time the wearing of the alb was quite generally continued throughout the Lutheran churches of Germany; here and there, as in Nuernberg, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, also the richer vestments of pre-Reformation times. Even in unliturgical Wuerttemberg the Sacrament is not administered nor the marriage ceremony performed except by a pastor wearing the alb over his black gown.

There are several reasons why vestments are worn. The first is symbolical. The pastor's vestment is the symbol of his office, designating that he stands before the congregation not as man, but as pastor and preacher, speaking not his own words, but God's Word. In the Lutheran Church the vestments of the clergy do not signify that they are above, or separated from, the congregation. The Lutheran Church accepts the Bible statement "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

A second reason for the wearing of vestments is liturgical. They lend a certain dignity and harmonious note to the service. Where a Lutheran church is built according to Lutheran architecture, the pastor, arrayed in a sack, frock, or Prince Albert coat, is as out of place as a pink shirt worn with a dress suit.

The same applies to choirs occupying prominent places in the church garbed in all the colors of the spectrum.

Where the choir is seated in view of the congregation, in the chancel or the transept, good taste requires that they be vested so that the choristers may blend into their surroundings and that the contrast and clash of color which the gowns of the feminine members of the choir unavoidably create may be avoided. The objection that vestments distinguish the members of the choir unduly from the congregation hardly holds true, as most choirs are thus distinguished by the separate and, in most cases, prominent place assigned to them. As vestments in general, so the vesting of choirs in particular must classify as an adiaphoron. Congregations make use of their Christian freedom in building churches as they should *not* be built, that is, with a choir conspicuously seated in front. Choirs belong where they are in Catholic churches, on a balcony over the entrance, out of sight. It is as a corrective of this architectural error that we take recourse to the vesting of choirs.

Every one knows how large a portion of Northern Germany is Prussia. In the beginning of the eighteenth century the ruler of this country was Frederick William I, the father of the famous Frederick II. Now, the house of Brandenburg had become Reformed, whilst the large majority of the subjects of this royal house were Lutherans. In 1737, acting in accordance with the unfortunate principle established in connection with the religious peace of Augsburg *Cuius regio, eius religio*, Frederick William "prohibited the remnants of Popery in the Lutheran Church — Communion vestments, candles, Latin song, chants, and the sign of the cross." It cannot be denied that there were not a few who welcomed this decree. On the other hand, there were very many who regarded this royal edict "a betrayal of genuine and pure Lutheranism." Congregations especially were deeply saddened because they were thus deprived of things that were dear to their hearts.

Petitions setting forth that Roman Catholics and Jews in Prussia were permitted to worship as they pleased; fervent entreaties addressed to their *Landesvater* to permit his Lutheran subjects to have as much right as those mentioned, had no effect. They only served to strengthen the determination of the king to foist upon the Lutheran Church the customs of the Reformed. Recalcitrant pastors were simply dismissed from office. View it as you will, defend it if that be your pleasure, the fact remains that the disappearance of the historic vestments of the Church from the outward church-life of Lutheranism spells a triumph of Reformed influence.

It is encouraging to note a gradual return to the use of the gown in many denominations which years ago had utterly condemned its use. It is found now in common use among Methodists and Baptists, the churches which abominated and abhorred it as a remnant of Popery. Especially the fashionable churches of these two denominations, as of the Congregationalist and Christian churches, have adopted the pulpit gown. It is in common use among Presbyterians. The Episcopalians of course have always had it, even as they have always supplied their choirs with vestments.

But how about the traditional Lutheran vestments of the minister — the surplice, chasuble, etc.? Shall their use be restored? There is a tendency in many quarters to do this, and for the sake of completeness the reasons for this return to the use of more elaborate vestments are here quoted from one of its advocates: —

“Why must the minister be vested in somber black? On Christmas and Easter, those joyful seasons of the church-year, white, the color of joy and of purity, adorns altar and pulpit. To accentuate the setting, the pure white Easter lily graces the sanctuary in connection with the

resurrection festival; but the custom of only 150 years decrees that the messenger of joy must in his outward attire resemble the cheerless raven. So keenly have some of our men felt the incongruity of it all that they are wearing the season stoles in order that there might be some sort of harmony between them and the altar and the pulpit vestments which surround them. We admire their progressive liturgical thought; we do not admire the individualism which would create a better liturgical appearance for the pastor, which, however, has this demerit, that it is neither flesh nor fish. If any changes are to be made, why not adopt the historic vestments worn by our fathers? I understand perfectly well that the liturgical customs of the Old Testament do not concern us in the New, but it is at least food for thought that by the will and ordinance of God the Old Testament priest was robed in white. By common consent black is the color of sorrow. For that reason we use it on Good Friday and throughout Holy Week and at the time of funerals. Is not the Gospel the message of 'good tidings of great joy'? Why, then, must he who proclaims it consistently appear in the color of sorrow?"

#### IV.

There is a growing appreciation in America of services ordered liturgically. Expressions are multiplying of the type illustrated by the following from the *Kansas City Church World*: "Much as one regrets the formalism, indifference, and sometimes carelessness with which liturgical service is prayed, there is much to be said in favor of such services. There is always a well-known and recognized terminus at least, and one cannot possibly be at the mercy of a minister who may have his hobbies or who may not have made preparation for this important part of the service. Again I have been interested in recognizing parts

of the *Book of Common Prayer* appearing with no small degree of regularity in the so-called free prayers in churches of a number of denominations. And if I may say so, it seems to me that such inclusions improve the prayers greatly."

The *Christian Observer*, in 1912, found a "growing tendency" towards the use of the liturgy in some Presbyterian congregations and acknowledges its confusion at the discovery. The editorial of the *Observer* is interesting to Lutherans: —

"On the first Sabbath of April we worshiped in a conservative Presbyterian church. The music was glorious, and the sermon was strong and spiritual. But the various parts of the service and the total effect revealed the growing tendency — we had almost said the absolute surrender — of the modern Protestant churches to the ritualistic principle. It was not the Sabbath, the Lord's Day, that was honored; it was Easter that was celebrated. The cross, which was sternly banished from the churches of the Reformation, occupied a central place on the pulpit, wrought in flowers, it is true, and not in metal or marble; nevertheless, there it was, a religious symbol in a Christian church. The gowned choir of twenty-four voices entered the church in stately processional and passed out singing the recessional hymn. In other churches of the Presbyterian order there was even more of the liturgical element, the Apostles' Creed and other set forms borrowed from the ritualistic churches and alien to the Calvinistic conception of the church and its worship. Or if it is retorted that some of the Reformed churches have always retained certain features of the papal and prelatial service, we may say that they are alien to that freer conception of the church's worship which gave birth to our American Presbyterianism.

"One cannot but wonder where it will all end. We rub our eyes and ask whether our spiritual ancestors were mistaken; whether our catechisms were written in prejudice; whether the drift will carry all before it and give to ritualism the wide-spread and complete victory which it has long desired and planned. The careful observer cannot fail to note that this broadening movement in worship, if we may so describe it, marches abreast or ahead of a relaxing tendency in doctrine. Or we may slightly

change our figure and say that, while the ritualistic movement marches, well organized and aggressive, the doctrine and preaching limp straggling in the rear. Those sections of the Church — and we speak here of the Presbyterian Church as truly as of other denominations — where the new departures in worship have become settled and uncontested and enthroned customs are the conspicuous seats of new departures in doctrine. The distinctive elements of Calvinism are laid on the shelf. The atonement is shorn of its glory as a sacrifice for sin. The Word of God is not the final court of appeal. Justification by faith is more and more shaded into a semi-Romish doctrine of salvation by obedience and life.

“The great Presbyterian churches which have so long stood as the bulwark of orthodoxy and simple worship have *to all appearance* abandoned the fight and are going over, piece by piece, to Liberalism and ritualism. It may be that we have laid too great a stress on form, on the perils of liturgy, and the values of our freer, simpler worship. But we certainly have been right in our emphasis on the essential importance of adherence to the truths plainly taught in the Word of God. If we cannot restrain our people from their love of liturgy, let us teach them the Bible, so that they will not forsake its central and commanding doctrines.”

It hardly seems credible, but some of our people and even some of our pastors look upon the Common Service as something “sectarian.” One might as well call the gown, the pulpit, and the altar sectarian. If by sectarianism we mean the Reformed denominations, the term is as inapplicable to it as it is to the Common Service; in fact, Reformed Christianity cast out not only this liturgical form, but all liturgies together with vestments, altars, organs, candles, and choir stalls.

Writing against the Heavenly Prophets in 1524, who, it should be remembered, opposed the use of vestments of any kind at the services of the church, Luther says: “Here we are masters and will not submit to any law, command, doctrine, or interdict. For that reason has the service of the Communion been celebrated in both ways at

Wittenberg. In the monastery we celebrated the Mass without chasuble or elevation, with the greatest simplicity, as recommended by Carlstadt. In the parish-church we have chasuble, alb, altar, and elevate so long as it pleases us." In the 1526 edition of the *German Mass* he insisted on the same liberty and retained vestments, candles, and altar.

We are not surprised therefore that Bugenhagen, who appropriately might be called the organizer of the Lutheran Church in Northern Germany, with great fidelity and with strong conviction pursued everywhere this policy of Luther. When in the city of Brunswick two ministers of Zwinglian tendencies ceased to use the vestments, he wrote to one of them, protesting that such innovations are an offense to others. In his argument against the offending zealots he shows the inconsistency of their position by reminding them that, if inherited things must be abolished, it is necessary to abolish not only vestments, but also altars, pulpits, statues, pictures, bells, and organs, yes, the entire church-building, which in its familiar form has been given to us by Roman Catholicism.

But while the Reformed churches are growing liturgical apace, there is a hesitancy in many Lutheran congregations to restore the ritual of the sixteenth-century Lutheran worship. For those who regret this there may be a grain of comfort in the observation that also the United Lutheran Church, which introduced the Common Service in America, has not achieved uniformity. The *Lutheran* said in 1924:

"Other synods were quick to recognize its merits and to use it in their English churches. Yet some of our United Lutheran churches do not avail themselves of the wealth of beauty and of sanctity that it has to bestow in their public worship. It is in perfect accord with our Confessions not to use this heritage of ours. There is no church law or rule that would make its use compulsory. Neither is there any law on the statute books of

our State or municipality that makes the eating of meat compulsory. Yet there are very good physiological reasons why a man should do so. And the individual who refuses to do so gives evidence of a constitutional ailment, which results in a weakened body at the best. There are also good moral and churchly reasons why our churches should use the Common Service, and we believe we may with propriety infer that the congregation that does not avail itself of the strength-giving spiritual nourishment that it has to give is suffering from a constitutional ailment. Ofttimes it is what we might term *Reformeditis*, due to a desire to keep on the most intimate terms with the Reformed congregations of the communities. In other cases we might diagnose the case as *Catholophobia*, a harrowing dread of being classed with Roman Catholics."

It is not true that our people will not take kindly to such things when the effort is intelligently made. Experience proves that any congregation will quickly learn to sing (and to prize) the complete order of service. The best method to follow, if a liturgical service exists in a mutilated form or is poorly sung, is to ask the congregation to remain for half an hour after the close of the evening service to learn some chant or perhaps a new hymn. Experience proves that people do like to do this and gladly stay for the purpose of singing. We have seen a barren, lifeless service transformed into a thing of richness and color by just this method. However, the pastor must show the proper degree of appreciation and must be able to explain briefly the meaning of what is practised and to set the example of chanting properly.

Rev. T. Benton Peery of Lakewood, O., chairman of the music Committee of the Synod of Ohio (U. L. C.), in a conference paper delivered in 1929, has a remark on this subject which is much to the point. Rev. Peery says:—

"The rendition of our service is almost always too slow. Perhaps if the standard of time had been made a quarter note instead of a half note for the writing of the service, it would give our organist and choir directors a better idea of the proper tempo



for the chanting of the service. To me the most vicious fault of all congregational singing is not tonal quality, but the tempo, or time, in which it is sung. Our ministers have no conception of this. I never attend a ministerial conference or synod meeting without a mingled feeling of pain and despair. The lagging of tempo and shouting of lungs gives one a perspiration of head, a suppression of tongue, and a depression of heart. Brethren, get your tongue out of your throat and prepare to sing with some precision, moving from one note to the other in flowing melody."

Mr. E. Seuel has uttered a similar caution against false tempo: "The congregation's or choir's part of the liturgical services is largely under the control of the organist, who should fully realize the responsibility resting on his shoulders. If the chanting be too slow, the congregation will lose interest, and participation will soon diminish. On the other hand, if the chants are sung entirely too rapidly, especially without a breathing space between phrases or sentences, the solemnity of the service is materially impaired. The organist should also bear in mind that he is to accompany the chants, not chant them on the organ; he must not beat out the single syllables, neither in full chords nor in staccato notes in treble or pedal. The accompaniment is a strict *sostenuto* of the proper chord until the time for the next chord comes." No doubt the dragging manner in which the *Gloria in Excelsis* has been accompanied, the intolerable pause at every comma, accounts for the omission of this element from the order of service in so many of our churches. Let the rule be that the liturgy is sung in much the same speed as if it were spoken, and most of our congregations will use the full Common Service.

#### V.

Let us descend to details.

Recording some observations which he made at a synodical convention, a contributor to the *Lutheran* of Novem-

ber 22, 1928, refers to some common errors in the reading of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Benediction: —

"My first observation was in the manner of praying our Lord's Prayer. Of course, one always notices that with many it is merely a ceremony. But the point to which I wish to call attention is that the sentence 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven' is wrongly said. Almost universally it is said in this fashion, 'Thy will be done [pause] on earth as it is in heaven,' whereas if said, as it is printed in our hymnals, catechisms, etc., it should be, 'Thy will be done on earth [pause] as it is in heaven.' Practically all laymen and a majority of ministers do not seem sufficiently familiar with the prayer to know where the pause comes in the sentence. Why not pray it as given and printed?

"Second. Practically the same lack of notice to punctuation occurs when ministers and laymen repeat the Apostles' Creed. In the Third Article they proclaim that they believe in 'the holy Christian Church [pause]; the communion of saints,' whereas it is written and printed in all our books, 'the holy Christian Church, [which is] the communion of saints.' To overlook the marks of punctuation entirely changes the meaning of both the prayer and the Creed for me and for many others. Why should not ministers, above all others, be sufficiently interested not only to say these things properly themselves, but also to teach their people to say them properly?

"My third observation concerns the ministry alone. Nowhere in the church hymnal, the *Book of Ministerial Acts*, or any other liturgical books of our Church can I find a benediction which begins with the words, 'Now, may,' (etc.). To begin with the words 'Now, may' is not to say a benediction, but a prayer; yet ministers continually make this mistake. In addition, a great many words are added to the end of the benediction which are neither found in the Bible nor in our liturgies. I recognize the fact that there are places where a benediction cannot properly be said, and at such times I use a prayer; but I also call it a prayer."

A writer who signs himself "Observator Criticus" in the *Pastor's Monthly* (American Lutheran Church) of February, 1933, addressed himself to the same subject with some asperity: —

"Have you ever noticed the excessive fondness of some of our pastors for those vapid, inane little words 'And now'? After a sermon they will say, 'And now, may the peace of God which passeth all understanding,' etc.; and when they pronounce the benediction, again those silly little words obtrude themselves: 'And now, may the Lord bless thee and keep thee.' They remind one of the radio announcers, who at the end of a program say, 'And so, ladies and gentlemen, we have come to the close of another presentation.' By the way, why is it that some pastors seemingly try so hard to improve upon the King James Version of the Old Testament benediction (Num. 6, 24—26) by saying, 'The Lord make His face to shine upon thee . . . and grant thee His peace'? Those old scholars of 1611 certainly knew something about the use of the King's English, it seems to me."

The following, from a critic in the *Lutheran* (U.L.C.), is also much to the point: —

"Who has not heard the liturgist announce the Epistle and the Gospel as the Epistle-'lesson' and the Gospel-'lesson'? Even general conferences of the Church have been made victims of this original infliction by men who ought to know better. The Epistle is the lesson from the epistles for the day, and the Gospel is the selection from the gospels for the day. To add the gratuitous explanation "lesson" lays one open to the charge of talking too much, of being tautological.

"In the announcement of the lessons one frequently hears the solemn affirmation that the Epistle is 'found,' the Gospel is 'found,' the lesson is 'found' in such a chapter, beginning at such a verse. This bears the implication that the lessons to be read have been 'lost' and are now 'found.' This position might be defended; for to many the teachings of the Word have been sadly lost; and even the scripture 'Search the Scriptures' might be cited in substantiation. However, the Church has adopted a more charitable formula in saying, 'The Epistle is written,' 'The Gospel is written,' 'The lesson is written.'

"'Recorded' is another favorite expression for 'written' on the part of many careless brethren. Doubtless specious arguments might be produced for 'recorded' instead of 'written'; for we believe in the Gospel record, and a record must be recorded; but that is not the form approved by the wisdom of the Church. Some original and assertive individual might even be found per-

haps who would insist that one should say, 'The Gospel is printed in such a chapter, beginning at such a verse'; and he might be ready to furnish arguments for his meticulousness. However, our rubrics order that one say, 'The Epistle is written,' 'The Gospel is written,' 'The lesson is written.' The Gospel was originally written, and we make use of the Scriptural perfect tense to imply that the Gospel has been written and remains as originally written by inspiration.

"Some time ago a very fine man, the successful pastor of a large and growing congregation, was heard to announce the Epistle as 'the epistolary lesson.' This rather cumbersome and startling adjective does not assert an untruth, but it is not the form selected by the Church. Loyalty to the Church demands that we follow the rubrics.

"Some good men announce the close of the Gospel for the day by saying, 'Here endeth the Gospel.' Such a statement might be construed as indicating a rather limited conception of the Gospel and of its divine Author. The Gospel never ends in its divine power and influence as mediated by the Holy Ghost. It is far better to follow the rubrics and to say, 'Here endeth the Gospel for the day.'

"The announcement of the lessons at the minor services seems to offer to some careless brethren an opportunity for the exhibition of originality and individualism. Who has not been wearied by hearing the lessons announced as the 'Scripture' lesson? The congregation does not expect to hear lessons read from the Koran, the *Imitation of Christ*, or Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. The worshiper knows that all the lessons are taken from the inspired Scriptures. To inform him of this fact is unnecessary.

"The practise in vogue in some quarters as 'our' Epistle, 'our' Gospel, 'our' lesson may not on the surface convey anything objectionable. It may convey a feeling of intimacy and fellowship that is desirable; but it must be borne in mind that the revelation of God is for all nations. To use the first person plural possessive pronoun smacks of selfishness and limitation. It is best to avoid it and simply to say 'the Epistle,' 'the Gospel,' 'the lesson.'

"Men of a pietistic trend have treated their congregations to something like the following: 'We have now reached the point in our divine service when with bowed heads, attentive minds, and reverent hearts we are privileged to listen to the lesson from the inspired Scriptures.' When a lover of our incomparable

liturgy is compelled to listen to an effusion like this, he feels like slumping down despairingly in his pew, and he is tempted to send in a hurry call for the friendly service of a generous palm-leaf fan and the kindly administration of a bottle of smelling-salts. If a good brother is afflicted with *cacoethes loquendi*, an itch for talking, let him reserve its gratification to the place of the sermon.

“‘Trifles make perfection, but perfection is no trifle.’ This saying applies also to the correct rendering of the liturgy. ‘At’ and ‘with’ are small prepositions, but their smallness does not warrant us in using them indiscriminately. Our rubrics order the use of ‘at’ in announcing the lessons, ‘beginning at the first verse.’ A careful count of the practise of various men in different parts of the Church shows that the preposition ‘with’ is used as frequently as the proper word ‘at.’ This is admittedly a small matter, a trifle; but why not show your loyalty in the use of the approved word?”

## VI.

Some of our congregations have frankly repudiated not only the Common Service, but any kind of liturgical embellishment. The service is opened with a hymn. The pastor reads the collect, then the Epistle. A hymn, followed by the Gospel. After the sermon another collect and the benediction. The congregation sings three Amens as its contribution to the service. This is the extreme left.

The number of such congregations is not large. The bulk of our churches have developed individually a type of liturgy, the Common Service rearranged and condensed, with special original features added and no attempt made to conform to the standards or practises of any congregation, be it even in the same city. I submit a digest of twenty orders of service which illustrate the common tendency: —

A. Omits half of the confession and moves it to a place after the Kyrie. Omits Gloria Patri. The choir has a Sentence after the Epistle. Offertory omitted. Three hallelujahs after the Gospel.

B. Begins with the "The Lord be with you" and two Sentences, followed by one half of the Gloria Patri, to which the congregation replies with the complete Gloria Patri. Epistle, hymn, Gospel, the Creed, hymn, sermon.

C. Omits Kyrie and Gloria in Excelsis. Sentence and collect. Offertory omitted.

D. Prelude, "Our beginning be," etc., followed by hymn. "The Lord be with you," etc., followed by confession. Introit omitted, and an original Kyrie of eight responses follows. Scripture, hymn, prayer, scripture, Creed, Gloria Patri, announcements, hymn. Offertory omitted.

E. Has only one scripture. The hallelujahs and the "Thanks be to Thee, O Christ" are omitted. The General Prayer is spoken after the offering has been gathered; congregation joins in the Lord's Prayer, then benediction.

F. Omits one of the responses before the confession, also the Kyrie and Gloria. Omits Creed, General Prayer, and offertory.

G. Opening sentence *before* the hymn. After the introit the remark is prescribed "Thus endeth the introit." Gloria in Excelsis is omitted.

H. After the introit the minister says, "Glory be to the Father," and after the Kyrie, "Glory be to God on High"!

J. Omits the invitation and the Gloria in Excelsis.

K. Gloria in Excelsis omitted, also the congregational chant after Epistle and Gospel.

L. Begins with "Make haste, O God, to deliver me," followed by the Gloria Patri, of which the congregation sings *one half*, followed by Amen and hallelujah. The Creed is recited, followed by a second chanting of the Gloria Patri. After the Scripture-reading: Pastor: "But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us." Congregation: "Thanks be to Thee, O God." Sermon followed by hymn;

then the Kyrie and the Lord's Prayer. Pastor: "The Lord be with you." Congregation: "And with thy spirit." Collect, doxology, followed by the benediction.

M. Of the confession the "O most merciful God" is omitted; also the Kyrie and Gloria. The Creed follows at once after Scripture-reading. There is no offertory, and the service closes with the stanza of a hymn read by the pastor.

N. Hymn. Pastor: "The Lord be with you." The congregation: "And with thy spirit." The introit or a verse from a psalm or an antiphon. Gloria Patri. Collect. Congregation: Amen, Amen, Amen. Scripture-lesson. Confession and absolution follow the sermon. The congregation rises for General Prayer, special intercessions, Lord's Prayer, votum, and announcements.

O. Opening Sentence followed by the introit. Confession omitted, and of the Gloria in Excelsis only the first sentence is used. At the close of service the General Prayer and intercessions precede the benediction.

P. Responses omitted before confession, which is read only on Communion Sundays. Gloria in Excelsis omitted.

Q. Gloria in Excelsis omitted "because it is too cumbersome."

R. Kyrie and Gloria omitted.

S. The Introit read *responsively*. Gloria omitted.

T. Omits opening Sentences, the confession is followed by the Kyrie, then absolution. Introits and Gloria are canceled. A doxology is sung after the Epistle.

U. Omits the Kyrie and the Gloria in Excelsis, and "after the benediction is sung Doxology No. 578. We formerly used the Kyrie and Gloria, but being pressed for time, we are now omitting them."

Under the heading "Botching the Liturgy" a contributor to the *Pastor's Monthly*, a magazine issued by the

American Lutheran Church (formerly of the Ohio Synod) expresses his "heartily dislike, not to say contempt, for the butchering and botching of our beautiful Lutheran liturgy. Is it perhaps," he asks, "a craving for originality, or is it simply ignorance that causes them [ministers] thus to violate a sacred trust committed to them when they accepted their call as Lutheran ministers?" He specifies: —

"One pastor omits the confession of sins from the morning service; another pronounces the benediction, not from the altar steps, but near the exit of the church; a third takes all sorts of liberties with the Communion service; a fourth omits important parts of the baptismal or confirmation ritual. Mr. Editor, when I go to a Lutheran church of our synod, whether in my own home town or in another locality, I expect to take part in a *Lutheran* service, according to a ritual which my church-body has officially approved and publishes in its agenda and hymnal, and I resent any attempt on the part of any individual to deprive me of the edification which I seek in every single part of that ritual."

In a plea for uniformity a writer in the *Lutheran Church Herald* (Norwegian) pictures the experience of a pastor who fills the pulpit of another: —

"In filling another's place or helping at a service, we have to inquire as to the order of service. We have had to learn a different order then and there. We have had to study and investigate. If the time is short, matters become worse. The organist is a stranger. She may be capable, she may not. She may inspire confidence, she may not. It often becomes a condition that many times proves provoking to the preacher, who has his sermon in mind, and to the people awaiting the Word. We are as different in our services as the States are in their marriage laws. We have to learn the usages in the specific congregation before we can do what we came for. Were we all alike, all confusion and anxiety would be eliminated. One of several things happens when we fill another's place having a different service. We break down and stop, to our chagrin and the congregation's sympathy. We muddle things to our own discomfiture and the bewilderment of the people. We let all things go



by the board and, disregarding the congregation, use what we think is our best judgment. We bluff through the whole service somehow, getting through in some way, shape, or manner, but lose the prime purpose, edification. Our liturgy, though in a fixed form, is capable of serving Christian liberty. We want to bring out the fact that it is not a command, but a privilege, a duty, and a blessing."

The situation is a familiar one. Let us say there is an exchange of preachers on Mission Sunday. Rev. Mueller of Pendleton exchanges pulpits with Rev. Meyer of Unionville. Rev. Mueller arrives at the Unionville church half an hour before the service begins. He is young and inexperienced; otherwise he would have made sure of an hour's study of the liturgical situation preparatory to the conduct of the service in a strange church. As it was, half an hour's interview with the teacher, the janitor, an elder, two ushers, and the minister's wife left him in a state of apprehension due to a twofold uncertainty: 1. misgivings about certain points that were not settled in the directions just obtained from the local authorities; and 2. a distinct feeling that somewhere his memory will slip also regarding those features which were definitely outlined. The janitor and the teacher held that the announcements precede the Lord's Prayer, while an usher, an elder, and the pastor's wife asserted that the announcements follow the Lord's Prayer. Would he remember to speak the Amen after the collect, and would he remember to bid the congregation rise for the benediction? Would he pass out the collection baskets after the Epistle or after the Gospel? He had a distinct feeling that something would go wrong. In this he was not mistaken. This is what happened. While reading the introit, he remembered that these sentences were to be uttered while the pastor faces the altar; instead of letting bad enough alone, he described half a revolution about his axis in the exact middle of the introit. His final vestry

meditation on a somewhat involved bit of exegesis in the second part of his sermon was interrupted by an excited elder, who darted into the sacristy to tell him that the ushers were in front of the altar waiting to be given the baskets. He mounts the pulpit. While in the middle of his introduction, he remembers that in Unionville the intercessions are spoken at the lectern, after the reading of the Gospel for the day; and while continuing to "introduce" his theme, his mind is feverishly active trying to arrive at a resolution whether to intercede for a young couple after the benediction or whether this might not best be done in the pulpit, — only to remember that the names of the happy young people were left on the altar, where he had used the notation as a bookmark. Incredible as it may seem, the guest preacher was keeping this twin motor in operation during the entire introduction, and not once did his lips falter or his voice lack resonance. The experience is a horrible one nevertheless. The intercession for the betrothed was spoken to the wide-eyed congregation after the collect, when the heads had been bowed to receive the benediction. When his gown was half removed after the Doxology, Brother Mueller remembered that he should have remained at the altar and closed with a suitable hymn verse.

Meanwhile Rev. Meyer was initiated into our liturgical chaos as illustrated at the Pendleton church. It was the first time he had been invited to fill a strange pulpit, and ignorant of our synodical individualism in respect to the order of service, he had intended to carry through the order as he had received it in his first charge, which was his present congregation. Arriving fifteen minutes before the opening of the service, he briskly copied the hymn numbers on a slip for the sexton and then enveloped himself in the *pastor loci's* gown. He looked for the bands, asked an usher who just stepped in where he might find

them, and discovered that the things are not worn in Pendleton. The sexton reappeared, informing Rev. Meyer that five hymns were needed instead of four and that he had forgotten the Doxology. The bells were ringing when the necessary additions had been made. Of the agonies of that service our Brother Meyer will not cease to tell during the remainder of his life. The services began with an unprogramed pause when the visiting pastor did not proceed to the altar to open the services with "Our beginning be made," etc. Neither sexton nor usher nor organist had thought of mentioning this little feature; it was so "self-evident." So Pastor Meyer, with a gait that was nothing if not majestic, strode from the sacristy to the altar while the congregation stood in awesome silence. He read the first line of the Kyrie, but hearing no response from the congregation, and noting too late a double brace around the section (an original way our pastors have of indicating an omission from the liturgy), he proceeded forthwith to read the Epistle for the day. He had overlooked the Gloria in Excelsis. The organist, however, made up for his omission and intoned it *after* the Scripture-reading, only to subside in confusion when the congregation failed to enter into the spirit of it. Aside from the fact that Rev. Meyer read the General Prayer from the pulpit, whereas the congregation was accustomed to hear it after the offertory, and aside from pronouncing *amens* where organist and congregation ordinarily regarded it as their contribution, the service was completed without much further confusion. But what it means to await the singing of an Amen that never comes or to find oneself in the midst of a collect or Gloria when discovering that it is marked "omit," or endeavoring to decipher the pencil-written marginal note giving a new liturgical direction, or having the organ intone some element of the liturgy that

has been transposed from another part of the service, or noting the reluctance of the congregation to rise for a prayer or intercession and therefrom concluding that this part is out of the customary sequence, — what it means to lead an unknown liturgy those of us can describe who have filled pulpits as guest preachers.

These marginal and interlined directions, by the way, deserve a chapter by themselves. In some of the agendas which we have used the changes in the liturgy, however sweeping, were at least indicated clearly in ink and written in a legible hand. Even so, the task of adjusting oneself during the progress of the service to the spirit of emendation which has refashioned the Common Service is a heavy strain on any guest preacher. But the weight becomes almost insupportable when revisions have been written over revisions, the pen-written changes crossed out by a redactor who has written them with pencil in perpendicular on the margin, with braces, arrows, and a system of serpentine lines indicating after which remnant of the original text the insertion is to be made. Possibly the climax is reached when the margin says "Here to page 57."

Some congregations have caused the locally adopted order of service to be printed on a leaflet. All those which I have seen are printed in type so perniciously small that no one not fully acquainted with the text will be able in the dim light of the altar space to follow the directions and text without stumbling. But such leaflets are the exception. In most of our sacristies there is a typewritten order of service, which the minister may lay into his agenda. After marking the places for collects, intercessions, etc., with a bookmark, one does fairly well, although these typed directions have a disconcerting way of leaving one in the dark regarding the responses of the congregation (as to length, the addition of Amen, etc.) and regarding such

details as receiving the offerings and what to do with the stack of baskets afterwards. Possibly the most objectionable feature in our entire liturgical life is the special made-to-order or made-to-fancy order of service typed with necessary directions upon a sheet of bond paper which is neatly framed under glass — and then fastened with four screws to the inside of the sacristy door! Fancy the guest preacher leaving this safe harbor behind him as he takes his seat in the altar space and endeavors to remember the various dislocations, amputations, and ingraftings of the liturgy to be shortly performed, at the same time keeping an eye on his hymnal and running through the chief points of his sermon.

## VII.

But who is this clothed in a white linen garment, — the alb, if we mistake not, — preceded by a crucifer vested in amice and alb and followed by a thurifer, with a cloud of incense hovering over the group as they chant a tune in Gregorian plain-song?

And who are those vested clerics at the altar who hold the book for another person in ecclesiastical gown while he chants the Gospel for the day? Who are these young men in tight-sleeved vestments who move a book from one side of the altar to the other, who swing a censer against the clergyman, against his assistants, and finally against the congregation, while incense curls to the rafters above?

What you are viewing is an illustration of the law of action and reaction. Again, what you are viewing is an illustration of the Lutheran principle that church ceremonies are to be classified as *adiaphora*. We are not accustomed to have more than one minister officiate at the consecration of the elements in the Eucharist. We are not accustomed to have the book of forms, or liturgy, moved from one part of the altar to another during the liturgical service.

Making the sign of the cross has long been limited to the ritual of Baptism and Communion and is then only performed on another and not upon oneself. Similarly, kneeling and bowing has been limited to Holy Communion, while in the celebrating of full eucharistic services these genuflections are quite numerous.

We see in this exuberance of ritual, now advocated in some quarters, a perfectly natural reaction to the bare, jejune, and unliturgical service found in so many of our churches. Instead of practically no liturgy at all we are asked to recover every element that has passed out of use, whether for good reasons or not, in the Lutheran Church.

The Liturgical Society of St. James, while assuming no responsibility for the liturgical views or practises of individual members, does announce the purpose of fostering a revival of liturgy in our Church. Among its objects are the following: "to preserve and to restore the traditional liturgy, rites, and ceremonials; to devote ourselves to the study and use of the Gregorian plain-chant; to restore to our Lutheran Church the consciousness of her unbroken tradition and her ecumenical and catholic tradition and ministry; to get one parish in every large Lutheran city in which the liturgical life may be fostered; to foster Christian day-schools in which the liturgy may be learned as well as the Gregorian chant and the children accustom themselves to certain devotional hours."

Now, if we weigh the merits of either tendency, that towards making the service bare of traditional liturgical elements and that of embellishing it with a colorful ritual, the latter is certainly more in harmony with original Lutheran tradition. The Church of the Reformation, however, did not attach much importance to the "laudable practises" which were carried on into the Lutheran Church as a historic endowment. The Reformers treated them

lightly. The elevation of ritual to a level equal to that which the sermon has in worship runs counter to Lutheran traditions. The liturgical part of the service, even the Eucharist, must remain subordinate to the sermon. And there are things liturgy cannot do. Liturgy will not rouse a dormant conscience; will not create a consciousness of sin which makes the heart eager for the consolation of the Gospel; will not instruct and in the best sense of the word edify, that is, build up the inner man with ever new additions of spiritual knowledge. Liturgics does not make plain the Word, does not lead into a better knowledge of Christian doctrine. Those who join in the liturgy — and I say, let it be ample, ornate, beautiful — have tasted the heavenly food, have been transformed by it, and praise God for His mercies. But the ministry of the Word alone will keep them sound in spirit and loyal to the truth, so that also their worshiping will be done “in spirit and in truth.” In the Reformed churches, as already noted, the trend towards liturgy has not been altogether wholesome. In it not an aid to spiritual edification, but a substitute for it, the appeal of esthetics replacing the lost appeal of the Gospel, has been found. There is more and more of the form of worship and less and less of the contrite spirit eager for light and strength. The Lutheran Church should heed the lesson of this development. Ours is indeed a liturgical Church. Let our services be restored to uniformity, with none of the traditional elements of the Common Service omitted. Let those who desire that sort of thing indulge their liking for vestments, candles, and incense. But let nothing be done or implied that will mean a departure of the congregation from the Lutheran conception of the Sacrament and of the ministerial office.

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## THE ENGLISH BIBLE UP TO DATE.

### I.

When reading the English Bible, we are sometimes reminded of the fact that it was written more than three hundred years ago. The translators of 1611 would to-day not speak of merchants as "chapmen." They would not refer to baggage as "stuff." They would distinguish between food and "meat." And if some one is being hindered, they would not refer to it as being "let" — a word having a meaning now exactly the opposite of what it meant in 1611. Usury to-day means excessive or unlawful interest; the English Bible uses it for interest. Temperance once meant self-control, an umpire was called a "daysman," things boiled were "sodden," and a flower in bloom was "bolled." There are many other archaisms in the Bible; but let these suffice. English-speaking people have a right to ask, Why cannot we have a Bible which gently substitutes the modern term for the obsolete? The demand is justified.

Every page of the English Bible contains "thou's" and "thee's" and strange endings like "didst" and "sitteth." These make the book stand out as something apart, something that lacks contact with our modern life. Why not make the prophets and kings, the apostles and their Lord, speak in the modern tongue? In their own lives they spoke the Hebrew and the Greek of their day; living to-day, they would speak the English in common use. Why not a translation of the Bible into modern English? Was not the English of the Authorized Version that of people of the time of Queen Elizabeth? It sounded modern enough to those who first received it. Our own age is entitled to a Bible that speaks our own language. All of which is

quite reasonable, so reasonable indeed that some sixty years ago a committee of British clergymen were put to work with the commission that they revise the translation of 1611. They worked hard and in 1881 completed and issued the New Testament. The revised edition of the Old Testament appeared four years later. When the English revision was published, the English committees disbanded, but the American committees continued their organization. They felt that all too brief a time had been allowed for the consideration of many important questions in the English revision and that it was clearly their duty to preserve their organization and to continue their work on the lines upon which they had thus far proceeded. The result was the American Standard published by Thomas Nelson and Sons in 1901.

It is not the purpose of this essay to draw a critical comparison between the British and the American revisions. Both have eliminated the antiquated terms and in a number of places have improved the translation. The King James Version renders the famous passage in Acts 17, 22, 23 thus: "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious," which is changed in the American Standard Version to the true meaning of the original: "Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive ye are very religious." There can be no doubt that the later translation is correct while the old was misleading. The distinction between "shall" and "will" is corrected in the American Standard. In Ps. 121, 4 the King James Version reads: "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." The American Standard Version: "Behold, he that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep." The King James Bible in Matt. 6, 34 makes Jesus say, "Take no thought for the morrow." What He really did say, as given in the American Standard Bible, is, "Be not therefore anxious for



the morrow." Both the British and the American versions have retained the stately march of sentences that characterizes the translation of 1611.

Except in the case of special students the British version has not become a factor in the American churches. Quite a number, however, have accepted the American Standard Bible as their official text, and it is generally quoted in theological works. What, then, causes us to favor the continued use of the A. V.? There is a Unitarian marginal note to John 9, 38, which, whatever merits the American Standard may have, makes it unacceptable to the great body of people in our Church. This marginal comment "explains" the word "worship," where it is said of the man born blind that, when Jesus asked him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" he, after a moment of hesitation and questioning, replied, "Lord, I believe," and "worshipped" Him. The marginal comment reads as follows: "The Greek word denotes an act of reverence, whether paid to a creature (as here) or to the Creator (see chap. 4, 20)." These words constitute a clean-cut assertion that the One who declared Himself to be "the Son of God" and whom the healed man worshiped as such was a creature. The comment is obviously and unmistakably Unitarian. How this "outrageous" comment got into this version of the Bible it is not easy to say. It is noteworthy that one of the members of the New Testament Company (Committee) of Revisors, Dr. Ezra Abbot, was a Unitarian, who believed that, if there are passages in the New Testament "in which Jesus is recognized as the object of divine worship, the unity of God would seem to be infringed." In its obvious sense, as an assertion of the creaturehood of Christ, this comment accurately expresses the view of Dr. Abbot. The publishers, Messrs. Thomas Nelson and Sons, have refused to alter this comment. As a matter of fact the

American Standard is published under a patent which forbids any change in the footnotes.

Both the British and the American revision in their prophetic, especially Messianic passages indicate a "letting-down" of the doctrinal standards of the new translators compared with those of three hundred years ago. Job 19, 25—27 is a clear reference to the resurrection of the body, even if the second half of verse 26, "Yet in my flesh shall I see God," were lacking. The new translators make of this: "Then without my flesh shall I see God." Why? The translation violates the Hebrew text and its context.

These blemishes have prevented a larger acceptance of the new revisions by the conservative American churches.

## II.

But to many a one these revisions did not appear radical enough. The general style and diction is still distinctly "old-fashioned." The text has the same monotonous division into chapters and verses. Also these revisions do not look like a modern book. The demand continued,—why not give us the Bible in modern English? And so from 1920 to 1925 no fewer than six new translations appeared, two embracing both Testaments. Making a tour of the bookshops in 1925 would have yielded the following: *The New Testament* (1922) and *The Old Testament* (1925), by James Moffatt of Glasgow. *The New Testament* (1923), by Prof. Edgar J. Goodspeed of the University of Chicago. *The Centenary Translation of the New Testament* (1924), by Helen Barrett Montgomery. *The New Testament in Modern Speech, an Idiomatic Translation into Every-day English,* by the late Richard Francis Weymouth of London. *The Riverside New Testament* (1923), by William G. Ballantine. *The Shorter Bible* (1918—1923), Old and New Testaments, by Charles

F. Kent of Yale and others. A new translation of the New Testament by Rev. E. E. Cunnington was reported from England in 1931. Edgar J. Goodspeed and J. M. P. Smith, both of Chicago University, are the authors of the American translation, of which a condensation has appeared under the title *The Short Bible* (1933).

The opinion of a great New Testament scholar, Dr. A. T. Robertson of the Louisville Baptist Seminary, must carry some weight as we inquire into the merits of these new translations. In the *Sunday-school Times* of 1924 he passed them in review. He said regarding Moffatt's New Testament: "This work by Moffatt is brilliant and stimulating to an unusual degree. He is a thorough Greek scholar, in touch with modern linguistic research and with a fresh and virile style and a quick and lively imagination. But it is a chastened style, that does not run riot, though the new renderings grip one's mind by their very vigor. Many of his renderings are exceedingly happy. It is small wonder that students of the New Testament have found this translation so rich with fertile suggestions."

Goodspeed's translation is called "very readable." "Dr. Goodspeed does not aim to give American slang at all, but only thoroughly understandable vernacular for the business man who reads papers and magazines. The ambition of Dr. Goodspeed is to get the New Testament read by the average American. It is a laudable aim, as any one can see. . . . Dr. Goodspeed is in thorough sympathy with the new light on the language of the New Testament from the papyri discoveries and comparative philology and has applied the new knowledge to his translation. The book is well printed. The chapters and verses are indicated at the bottom of the page only. The quotation-marks, punctuation, and paragraphing are just like a modern book of fiction. It is an eminently readable translation. . . . The

book has had an unusual circulation and promises to make the New Testament read by the masses more than ever."

As for Dr. Ballantine's version, this translator "does not profess to put his version into distinctly American vernacular, as Dr. Goodspeed does, but into 'the living English of to-day.' He is not unaware of the work of others. Originality has been neither sought nor shunned. He owes much to the King James Version, the Revised Version, the *Twentieth-century New Testament*, Weymouth's *New Testament in Modern Speech*, Moffatt's *New Translation*. He considers them all of great merit, but feels that each one leaves something to be desired. So he proceeds to do it."

The American Baptist Publication Society (Philadelphia) celebrated in 1924 the first hundred years of its work, partly by the *Centenary Translation of the New Testament*, by Helen Barrett Montgomery, A. M., D. H. L., LL. D. The Gospels have appeared. Dr. Robertson says: "Some of her renderings are striking, and the translation runs along with smoothness and grace." A reviewer in the *Chicago Tribune* was not quite so gracious regarding this latter production when he wrote: "Opening the book at random, the first heading to hit the eye yesterday was for Thursday of Passion Week. As a caption for Matthew 24 this simple, every-day phrase stuck out: 'The Great Eschatological Address.' Eschatological! 'Language of every-day life!' He who runs may read — if he packs an unabridged dictionary with him."

### III.

Whether we have Schiller translating Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, or Max Mueller translating Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, or Luther, or any one else translating the Bible, we are interested in the approach. What is the

attitude of the translator to his author? Luther, Tyndale, the translators of 1611, accepted the Bible as God's revelation to man, the very Word of God. James Moffatt announces in the introduction to his New Testament that it is "freed from the influence of the theory of verbal inspiration." Wm. G. Ballantine, formerly president of Oberlin and thoroughly at home in Greek and Hebrew, should have been well equipped for his work. But what was his attitude towards the central doctrines of Christianity? Dr. Ballantine has written a book, *Understanding the Bible*. Under the head of "Problems in Translating" he gives as an instance Phil. 2, 6, where he rules out the translation "being in the form of God," with its intended sense that Christ had the nature of God. The author continues: "The truth is that Paul held the view, later represented by Arius, that Christ was the first created being, the typical man, God's agent in creating and redeeming the world. The great conflict at the memorable Council of Nicaea in A. D. 325 was between John's view, represented by Athanasius, and Paul's view, represented by Arius. Athanasius prevailed so completely that the Church has ever since believed that Paul and John agree — an obvious mistake. [!] . . . How astonishing to find that this immense structure of theological doctrine, this total transformation of Paul's Christology, rests merely on the baseless assumption [!] that the word 'was' has in this one place a sense which nobody thinks of attributing to it in any one of the sixty other places where it occurs in the New Testament!"

We do not expect translators of the liberal school to display much reverence for the Greek and Hebrew text, and our fears are borne out by the product of their labors. Moffatt does not hesitate to translate John 1, 1 "The Logos was divine," whereas the Greek distinctly says "was God."

V. 14: "We have seen His glory, glory such as an only son enjoys from his father," whereas the text says "as the Only-begotten from the Father." V. 18: "who lies upon the Father's breast," instead of "who is in the bosom of the Father." In chapter 2 of the same Gospel he interpolates vv. 22—30 of chap. 3 because he believes that they belong here. Other "corrections" of the text are frequent. Elsewhere the words are distinctly doctored to eliminate the deity of our Lord, as when Simon's words John 6, 6. 9: "Thou art . . . the Son of the living God" are watered down to this: "You are the holy one of God." Consistently Moffatt translates the words of institution "This means My body." But why continue? The Moffatt version of the New Testament reflects an attitude at war not only with the principal doctrines of Christianity, but with the very text itself.

As we turn to the same scholar's translation of the Old Testament, the doctrinal bias of the translator is even more evident. In speaking, in the preface of the *New Translation*, of the difficulties of translating the Old Testament, Moffatt tells us: "The primary difficulties are started by the text. The traditional, or 'Massoretic,' text is often desperately corrupt"; and he makes this further statement: "But very few, apart from those who have done some first-hand work upon the subject, realize how uncertain and precarious is the traditional text of some books in the Old Testament." Such statements as these will come as a surprise to many. No one who loves the Bible and wants to believe that it is reliable and authoritative will accept them without proof. Why does Dr. Moffatt make such statements? The answer is obvious. Unless it be admitted that the Old Testament text contains many errors, Dr. Moffatt would not dare to take the liberties with it which he does. If Christian people all believed the

Old Testament text reliable, they would speedily call Dr. Moffatt to account for changing it to suit his fancy. But if they accept such a statement as this because Dr. Moffatt says so and because other critics say so, then these gentlemen can make as many changes as they please without fear of serious opposition. For if the text is "desperately corrupt," who is to object to Dr. Moffatt's attempts to correct it? Consequently it is of importance to Dr. Moffatt that his readers should accept his low estimate of the Hebrew text. And every change he makes in it helps to convince the "innocent" reader that it is as corrupt as he claims.

Moffatt accepts the splitting up of the Hebrew text by rationalistic critics. According to his view the Pentateuch (Genesis to Deuteronomy) is made up of various strands or documents which, in agreement with the traditional critical method, are called J, E, D, etc. In many places he prints the J portions in italics. Gen. 2, 4b to 4, 19 is printed thus to indicate that it was written by the Jehovistic scribe. Then Gen. 3, 20, 21 are printed in Roman letters and are enclosed in double brackets to show that this passage is an editorial addition or a later interpolation. The italics begin again at 3, 22 and carry over to 4, 26. The whole of the fifth chapter is attributed to the J writer; then 6, 18 is ascribed to E; at that point J breaks again and finishes the chapter. Chapter 7 is broken into rather small bits by this process. V. 10 is placed before verses 7, 8, and 9, and v. 16 is placed before v. 12, the latter verse being sandwiched between verses 16 and 17. Verses 1—5 are assigned to E, while v. 6 is supposed to belong to J and v. 7 to E. Verses 16 and 17 are actually divided between two documents, parts belonging to J and the rest to E. Thus Genesis is converted into a veritable patchwork, and many patches, some larger, some smaller, serve

to bedizen the rest of the Pentateuch. In thus parceling out the Biblical writings, Dr. Moffatt ignores the works of all the great scholars of the conservative school, who have again and again shown how impossible are the critical theories of the radicals. All the work done by Robertson (of Glasgow), Orr, Cave, Green, Bartlett, Bissell, and McKin, and more recently by Koenig, Wace, Fitchett, Finn, Naville, Wilson, Kyle, and Moeller, is simply ignored, and the translator does not even drop a hint that there are great scholars who call into question the speculations of the shredding critics.

As is well known, the critics reject the interpretation of Is. 53 as prophetic of Christ's atoning death. The "Servant" is identified with Israel, not with the Messiah. Now observe how Moffatt introduces this meaning into his text. In Is. 52, 13 we read: "Behold, My Servant *shall deal prudently*; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high." This rendering agrees with the Hebrew and is supported by the ancient versions. Moffatt's translation is: "Behold, my servant *Israel* yet shall rise; he shall be raised on high." By making conjectural changes, he has altered "shall deal prudently" (*yaski*) into "Israel" (*Yisra'el*). Then he boldly inserts the words "they cry" in 53, 1 and the word "Israel" in v. 2, making these verses read: "Who could have believed," they cry, "what we have heard? Whoever had the Eternal's power so revealed to them? Why Israel of old grew like a sapling," etc. In this way one of the great prophecies of the Old Testament has been eliminated.

The idea seems to be to reduce the Bible to the level of heathen literature. In almost every instance the term "elders of Israel" is translated by Moffatt "sheiks of Israel." Take Ex. 3, 16: "Go and gather the sheiks of Israel and tell them," etc. Now, why was the word "elders"



translated "sheiks"? Because that is the name of the leaders or chiefs of pagan, nomadic clans and tribes. To use the term in connection with Israel reduces God's people to the level of wild, roving tribes like those of the Bedouins. The translation abounds with other passages which secularize the Old Testament. In Prov. 22, 6 we read: "Train up a child in the way in which he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Any one familiar with the Old Testament knows that "way" is used again and again, in a moral and religious sense, of the conduct of life. The "way of the Lord" means a life lived in conformity with the will of God. Furthermore, in Proverbs the ethical sense is the usual sense. Dr. Moffatt's rendering of the verse "Train a child for his proper trade, and he will not leave it when he is old" destroys its religious significance, which the Bible regards as of paramount value, and makes this religious maxim nothing more than a word of counsel for the worldly-wise. In other words, it secularizes the verse. In Prov. 31, 30 we read: "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." Dr. Moffatt's rendering, or rather revision, of the passage is: "Charms may wane and beauty wither; keep your praise for a wife with brains." Here again the translation takes religion out of a verse and secularizes it. Gen. 1, 1 the Hebrew text says: "In the beginning God created (*bara*) the heaven and the earth." Dr. Moffatt changes this positive declaration into a greatly weakened subordinate clause: "when God began to form the universe." The author had the Hebrew text right before him; for he contends in his preface that he always went back to the original. Why did he change the first sentence of the Bible into a subordinate clause? And why did he excise from it all idea of creation? It is an error to translate the Hebrew verb *bara* (to create) by the En-

glish word "form." It does not mean merely to form or fashion. There are other Hebrew words to express that thought. The verb *bara* means to bring something new into existence. If Dr. Moffatt is correct, the Bible teaches nothing about the origin of the universe; nothing as to how its primordial material came into existence. The clause "when God began to form the universe" does not go back to a real beginning. It assumes that the material was already in existence and that God only began to fashion it. The reason is plain. The author does not believe in the doctrine of divine creation. He thinks that matter is eternal, evidently holding to the old doctrine of pagan philosophers. Gen. 1, 27 reads thus: "So God formed man in his own likeness, in the likeness of God he formed him, male and female he formed both." Thus, according to Moffatt, man was not created in the divine image; he was only formed. Out of what was he formed? Obviously this wresting of the Hebrew text was done to make it agree with the theory of evolution.

We were glad to note the criticism uttered by Prof. Oswald T. Allis, then of Princeton Theological Seminary. He called Moffatt's translation a "one-man" version, which introduces changes that have no objective warrant and merely represent the opinions of himself and other critics. "In making these changes, he adds no footnotes and gives the reader not the slightest intimation that he is reading Dr. Moffatt's opinions and not what the Old Testament itself says. . . . Dr. Moffatt and the critics of the subjective school which he represents are constantly engaged in manufacturing evidence to prove that their theory as to the unreliability of the Old Testament is correct in order to make it possible for them to change and reconstruct it as much as they please."

We turn next to the *Shorter Bible*, the work of Prof.

Charles F. Kent of Yale and a number of associates. Now, there is no reason why in this restless age one might not welcome a condensed Bible, containing its greater passages and making the reader eager to read the books in their entirety. But what Kent and his fellow-butchers have done is to apply the higher criticism to both Testaments in such a way as to make this *Shorter Bible* what a reviewer has called it, "a positively deadly book." For instance, not a trace of the book of Leviticus appears in the Pentateuch, where it rightfully belongs, but parts of two chapters of the book are inserted after Nehemiah, thus subtly suggesting that it was composed after the Exile. Of Daniel the prophetic parts (or what is left of them) are inserted last in the list of the prophets, thus implying that the whole book was composed long after Daniel's time. In the great Messianic fifty-third chapter of Isaiah it shocks one to see this passage omitted: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief; when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." A closer study of the *Shorter Bible* reveals the omission by fixed purpose of the principal texts that teach the inspiration of the Bible, the Atonement, the guilt of sin, the threats against false teachers, and the Second Advent. For instance, in Rom. 3 the passage from verses 19—28 is given entire, except two verses, the 25th and 26th. And these two are the heart of the passage, without which the rest of the passage is meaningless.

When God says to the serpent (in Gen. 3, 15), in pronouncing judgment in the Garden of Eden: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel," Professor Kent changes this so as to read,

"They shall bruise your head, and you shall wound them on the heel." The change might be almost unnoticed by a careless reader or might seem trifling. But it substitutes mankind for Christ. "Thou shalt bruise His heel" was God's prophecy of the conflict, many centuries later, between Satan and Christ, especially in the great Passion. "It shall bruise thy head," spoken by God of the Woman's Seed, could never have been said of men, for men cannot destroy Satan; only the Seed of the Woman (not of any man, for this Seed was a virgin's son), which was Christ in the flesh, could so bruise the head of the Serpent that it was said of him that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." The "simple" changing of singular to plural in the *Shorter Bible* destroys the heart-meaning of the passage in Genesis and eliminates the supernatural, the Savior, and salvation. The Messianic prophecy in Ps. 16, 10, in which the writer cries out, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption," is changed by the *Shorter Bible* to read, "Thou wilt not give me up to death nor let one who loves thee see the grave."

#### IV.

For all this loss of spiritual value have we in the new translations some compensation by way of a happy union of sound and sense, of phrasing and subject-matter? It was the *Independent*, which styled itself "a journal of free opinion," that spoke of the "maltreatment of the King James Version" by Professors Goodspeed and Smith of Chicago University. In the opinion of the editor these translators have been "vulgarizing and debasing sublime and beautiful things, bringing high qualities down to low capacities instead of educating the low capacities up to high qualities." He thinks a good example is found in the

translation of the Twenty-third Psalm, where the line "the valley of the shadow of death" is change to "Even though I walk in the darkest ravine"!

To thumb the new rendition over yields an impression that a thing of beauty is being defaced. It is like unto a highway sign-painter trying to touch up a Raffael, or a soap-ad poet attempting to rewrite Shakespeare. The authors on the whole seem to be deficient in the sense of beauty of language, which was so strong in those who wrought the Authorized Version. The reader lays the books down with a feeling that the writers have been fed on Greek and Hebrew roots so long that they have lost discriminating taste and no longer get the flavor of words. To the cripple at Bethesda Pool in John the King James Version says: "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Words welded into the language. But the new writers rewrite it. "Get up, pick up your mat, and walk," says Goodspeed.

Surprising enough, it is the *Advertising Age*, a national newspaper of advertising published in Chicago, that said regarding this version in its issue of December 5, 1931:—

"While the revision was in the hands of two college professors, who undoubtedly approached the task with earnestness and a real desire to make the Bible more useful, the effect is decidedly unsatisfactory, largely because of the commonplace language which is substituted for beautiful, simple, and poetic phrasing of many passages of the book. The language, instead of being dignified and affecting, descends to about the level of ordinary newspaper writing, which, while it serves a useful purpose, is seldom of high literary quality. The inference of the reader is that the changes were made in most cases for the sake of change rather than to improve the language; and while the ideas may be retained, the elimination of many of the most characteristic features of the Bible as it has been known can hardly commend it to those who are at all familiar with the work. Advertising men who admire the Bible for its literary qualities will undoubtedly continue to use the King James Version."

For example, the Lord's Prayer reads as follows: "Our

Father in heaven, Your name be revered. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Give us to-day bread for the day. And forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors. And do not subject us to temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

The following is the story of the Nativity brought down to the level of Chicago 1931: —

"There were some shepherds in that neighborhood keeping watch throughout the night over their flock in the open fields. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terribly frightened. The angel said to them: —

"Do not be frightened, for I bring you good news of a great joy that is to be felt by all the people; for to-day, in the town of David, a Savior for you has been born, who is your Messiah and Lord. And this will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped up and lying in a manger."

"Suddenly there appeared with the angel a throng of the heavenly army, praising God, saying,

"Glory to God in heaven and on earth:

"Peace to the men he favors."

"When the angels left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another: —

"Come! Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, that the Lord has told us of."

"And they hurried there and found Mary and Joseph, with the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they told what had been said to them about this child. And all who heard were amazed at what the shepherds told them; but Mary treasured up all they had said and pondered over it. And the shepherds went back, glorifying God and praising Him for all that they had heard and seen in fulfilment of what they had been told."

It is no credit to Prof. J. M. P. Smith, who translated the Old Testament in *The Bible — An American Translation*, that Rabbi Samuel S. Mayerberg of the Congregation B'nai Jehudah (Kansas City) is able to charge him with "abysmal ignorance of Hebrew," as illustrated in the following: —

"No one who has the slightest knowledge of Hebrew could possibly translate the phrase in the second sentence of the first chapter of Genesis 'a tempestuous wind raging over the surface of the waters,' because the Hebrew text can only be translated: 'And the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.' This is not a mere protest against verbiage, but is an insistence upon academic sobriety and honesty. In the Twenty-third Psalm, at the end, the authors give us a further abortion when they say: 'And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord down to old age.' Even a casual examination of the Hebrew text will prove that the author actually said 'forever and ever.'"

Tampering with the Twenty-third Psalm is like putting a Eugenie hat on Venus de Milo or shaving the beard off a Rembrandt. There are some things modernity cannot improve. If the authors of the so-called new translations really want to popularize the Bible, so that users of slang may understand it without difficulty, it has been suggested by an exasperated secular editor that they should head the Cain-and-Abel story with some such caption as this: "Cain Puts Abel on the Spot." "And perhaps they should turn to Proverbs, chapter 1, verse 8, and translate the sentence: 'Hear, my son, the instruction of thy father and forsake not the teachings of thy mother,' as follows: 'Get wise, old kid, to the wise-cracks of your old man and do not skidoo from the blah of your old woman.'"

The Twenty-third Psalm referred to in this criticism there reads: —

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want;  
In green pastures he makes me lie down;  
To refreshing waters he leads me.  
He gives me new life.  
He guides me in safe paths for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk in the darkest valley,  
I fear no harm; for thou art with me.  
Thy rod and thy staff — they comfort me.  
Thou layest a table before me in the presence of  
my enemies.

Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup overflows.  
 Only goodness and grace shall follow me all the  
 days of my life;  
 And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord down to  
 old age."

Time and again we note that even critics who are not in the least interested in the doctrinal content of the Bible and who have no reverence for its authorship become impatient with the unripe literary powers of those who attempt to produce substitutes for the Authorized Version. A reviewer in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* closed a discussion of Professor Forrest's translation of the Song of Songs as follows: —

"Professor Forrest has retained the general style of diction with which we are familiar, both in the invented passages and in the newly translated portions. But one need not be prejudiced in favor of the King James Version to say that wherever the new reading has been offered, there is an obvious loss of beauty. Compare the following, for example: —

"'Who is she that cometh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners?'

"'Who is this shining forth as the dawn, fair as silver moon, bright as noontide sun, majestic as embannered host?'

"Is it necessary to point out which is the wording of a novice?"

## V.

For almost three centuries the Authorized, or King James, Version has been the Bible of the English-speaking world. Its simple, majestic Anglo-Saxon tongue, its clear, sparkling style, its directness and force of utterance, have made it the model in language, style, and dignity of some of the choicest writers of the last two centuries. During



all these centuries the King James Version has become a vital part of the English-speaking world, socially, morally, religiously, and politically.

Speaking of some of our modern translators, Alfred E. Newton, the critic, says: —

"I yield to no man in my reverence for the Bible. Indeed, it is because of my reverence that I do not wish to see it tampered with. Men, in their efforts to make a good translation better or striving after exactness in a matter which is of no earthly importance, have lost all sense of beauty, which is its own excuse for being. Scientists and scholars may destroy our belief in a text which was entirely satisfactory to our ancestors, but what shall we say of a school that hopes to popularize by vulgarizing it? In one text Salome is described as a young lady who 'dances with inimitable grace and elegance.' The superb Magnificat in the first chapter of Luke becomes 'My soul with reverence adores my Creator, and all my faculties with transport join in celebrating the goodness of God, who has in so signal a manner condescended to regard my poor and humble state.' Here is the latest translation of the Twenty-third Psalm: 'The Eternal shepherds me. I lack for nothing. He makes me lie down in meadows green. He leads me to refreshing streams and revives life in me. He guides me by true paths, as he himself is true. My road may run through glens of gloom, but I fear no harm; for thou art with me, thy club, thy staff, they give me courage.'" Newton comments: "'Glens of gloom!' What wise man was it who remarked, 'Beware of the pitfalls of alliterations'? Verily, the Doctor is beside himself. Much learning hath made him mad. What we need most is not new versions or new principles, but better understanding of the significance of the version we have.'" (C. L. Goodell, *The Book We Love*, p. 21 f.)

"Rise," said Jesus; "Take up your bed and go walking away," says Montgomery. "Jesus wept," says John according to the Authorized Version in narrating the miracle of the raising of Lazarus. What could be more direct, simple, every-day English? But "Jesus shed tears" is the way Goodspeed rewrites it. "Jesus burst into tears," say Moffatt and Montgomery. "Heap coals of fire on his

head," says a familiar quotation. Moffatt rewrites it—"Make him feel a burning sense of shame." All the imagery and beauty wiped out. "The laborer is worthy of his hire," says Luke, a phrase that has filtered into common speech. "The workman deserves his pay," says Goodspeed. "The laborer deserves his wages," says Weymouth. "Get thee behind Me, Satan," says the Authorized Version in Matthew. It's part of the vernacular. "Get out of My sight, you Satan!" says Goodspeed. "Get behind Me, adversary," says Weymouth. "Ecce Homo!" Even the Latin is well known. John says in the Authorized Version: "And Pilate saith unto them, 'Behold the Man!'" Goodspeed rewrites it: "And Pilate said to them, 'Here is the Man!'" Weymouth says: "See, there is the man." The King James Version translates Paul: "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." Goodspeed rewrites it: "Stop drinking nothing but water; take a little wine for the good of your digestion and for your frequent attacks of illness." Mark, recounting the miracle of Jesus walking on the water, makes the Savior say according to the King James Version: "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." Words in daily quotation for three hundred years! The scholastic tinkerers, however, recast it. This is their idea of making it simpler. Moffatt makes it: "'Courage,' he said; 'it is I, have no fear.'" Weymouth says: "There is no danger, it is I; be not alarmed." John, opening his gospel, says: "In the beginning was the Word." That is not simple enough for Dr. Moffatt. To make it more readily understandable, he writes it: "The Logos existed in the very beginning." Dr. Moffatt likewise (in his "Glen-of-Gloom" Bible) spells Job this way—"Eyob." When it comes to the mote in thy brother's eye and the beam in thine own eye, as set forth in Matthew, the new translators

are at sixes and sevens. Weymouth makes it a splinter and a beam; Moffatt makes it a splinter and a plank, the *Shorter Bible* makes it speck and a splinter. "The wages of sin is death," says 1611. "The wages sin pays is death," says Goodspeed.

H. L. Mencken of Baltimore is well known for his everything but reverent attitude towards the Bible. But he values the Authorized Version as pure and unaffected English. He calls the study of the translations of Weymouth, Moffatt, Goodspeed, and Ballantine "research into theological pathology." He finds that "all they accomplish, in putting the original Greek into familiar English, is to put it into English so flabby and preposterous that all the beauty is gone out of it." He turns to the eighth chapter of St. John, the episode of the woman taken in adultery, and says: —

"You can recall no doubt the great speech that confounds the scribes and Pharisees, eager to put the woman to death: 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.' But perhaps you have forgotten the superb dialog that follows between Christ and the woman — the most stupendous scene in all drama, sacred or profane. I quote it from the Authorized Version: —

"When Jesus had lifted up Himself and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said; No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her; Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."

"Well, what do the modernizers make of this austere and colossal beauty, this masterpiece of simple and lovely English, as it was of Greek? Goodspeed, more discreet than the rest, omits it altogether: I can't find it in his version of John. But Weymouth tackles it boldly and with this almost unbelievable result: 'Then standing up, Jesus spoke to her, "Woman," he said, "where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she replied. "And I do not condemn you either," said Jesus. "Go and from this time do not sin any more."' Imagine it! 'No one,

sir!' and 'Do not sin any more.' But Ballantine, as impossible as it may seem, is still worse: —

"Jesus raised Himself up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one sentenced you?" She said, "No one, sir." Jesus said, "Neither do I sentence you. Go. From now on sin no more."

"And Moffatt, with a herculean effort, manages to be yet worse than Ballantine: 'Raising himself, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, sir." Jesus said, "Neither do I; be off and never sin again."

"Give your eye to that 'Be off!'"

Moffatt appears to be a man totally devoid of humor. The Philistines' message to Israel is translated in the King James Version as follows: "Tarry until we come unto you." Dr. Moffatt makes them say: "Stand where you are until we get at you." The King James Version says: "David dwelt in the fort and called it the city of David." Dr. Moffatt translated it: "David took up his residence in the stronghold and called it Davidsburg."

What is the superior translation: "In my father's house there are many resting-places" (Weymouth), or: "In My Father's house there are many mansions"? (The Greek has a word meaning "abiding-places.") Or note the matter-of-fact, secular flavor of this from the same translator's version of Matt. 2, 9 ff.: —

"After hearing what the king said, they went to Bethlehem, while, strange to say, the star they had seen in the East led them on until it came and stood over the place where the Babe was. When they saw the star, the sight filled them with intense joy. So they entered the house; and when they saw the Babe with His mother Mary, they prostrated themselves and did Him homage and, opening their treasure-chests, offered gifts to Him — gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But being forbidden by God in a dream to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by a different route."

Prof. J. B. Allen of Rawdon College, England, is an-

other reformer who seeks to put a modern "punch" into the Bible. He has chosen the Book of Isaiah for his first attempt at translating King James's English into King George's. For instance, he takes Is. 1, 23, which reads as follows: "Thy princes are rebellious and companions of thieves. Every one loveth gifts and followeth after rewards." This he has edited to read: "Your rulers are unruly and chummy with thieves. The whole lot, loving bribes, are running after rewards." (Again we notice that a secular critic takes issue with the translator, in this case because Professor Allen indeed drops from the thunder of the prophet, but only to the classical level of the conversation at an Anglican high tea. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* suggests: "If he really wanted to tickle the grass roots and the cement sidewalks, at least on this side of the ocean, he would phrase his passages something like this: 'Your big shots are hard guys and bat around with yeggs. The whole mob craves easy dough and hot-foots it after gravy.'")

## VI.

When Goodspeed issued his New Testament in modern English, the *Los Angeles Examiner* printed an editorial on "The Majesty of the Bible." Something the learned professors of Greek have forgotten, so it appears to this editor, is that there is in language "a certain fitness of things," which cannot be expressed by grammar and dictionary, but is above and beyond them both.

"It is in observance of this fitness that men do not discuss the fate of nations in the language of the street nor the great truths of life in the words of the vaudeville stage. The eternal verities, the highest aspirations, the supreme visions of men, require a frame and form of expression that reveal at once their nature and their dignity. The majesty, power, and glory of the language are invoked by men of taste and learning to visualize the majestic, powerful, and glorious thoughts that they intend to convey." In

the opinion of the *Examiner* "the average translator of the Bible into the language of the straphangers seems to have no vision of these familiar truths. Whatever his proficiency in Greek, his work is disfigured by his deficiency in English. In English he lacks the sense of dignity, of rhythm, of form, of everything that in literature may be designated as good taste. In music a gentleman of such limitations would jazz a Beethoven sonata."

"Why should the Bible be modernized at all?" asks the *Washington Post* (March 15, 1924) and continues: —

"The movement to rewrite the Bible in the language of the present doubtless traces to the fetish of modernity that has lately attained such prominence. But to what gain? The language of the Bible, as the translation has been handed down through the centuries, stands a model of forceful and beautiful literature. Those who put it into English were masters of the language, and they gave it splendor of diction that moderns cannot hope to improve upon. There is no more reason for modernizing the language of the Bible than for modernizing the pictorial representation of Biblical characters. If the Scriptures should be rephrased in the lingo of the day, by the same token Biblical characters should be portrayed in modern hats and skirts. If Moses must appear in a nifty morning suit, with beard removed, and Deborah in a golfing rig, with a cigaret, then their language should be brought up to date of course."

But it is said that, for instance, Moffatt's new version of the Old Testament is more nearly accurate in its rendition of the Hebrew. Our own opinion is recorded above; but we shall hear the *Kansas City Star* of July 24, 1927. Not acquainted with the refinements of Hebrew, the editor is willing to admit the greater accuracy of Moffatt. He continues: —

"Perhaps so. There may be a place for the new translation. But we trust its use will be restricted to the few who insist on scrupulous accuracy. The King James Version ought to remain the Bible for general reading. Anybody who can read English at all can read the King James Version, and anybody who is to learn to read English — as must each new generation — ought not to be offered the choice of learning any but the best English. The best writing that has been done in English — that of New-

man's *Apologia* and Lincoln's second inaugural, for example — has been grounded on the Bible as we know it. It is read by children at that age when the eye and the ear are most alert to receive impressions of what is beautiful and musical; and if there were no other consideration, the Book that is the great universal primer and text in the education of the race in its mother tongue ought not to find general circulation in maimed and mutilated form. . . . Those who learned its great language and great truths in childhood will not willingly see them decked out in the literary frippery of the moderns to serve no purpose but to show the ingenuity of translators in finding new modes of expression."

One need only pass in review some of the striking and melodious phrases that have been retained from Tyndale's version and have become part of the very stock of English speech: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Matt. 6, 24; "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow," Matt. 6, 28; "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction," Matt. 7, 13; "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," Matt. 18, 20; "He came to himself," Luke 15, 17; "I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight," Luke 15, 21; "A prophet hath no honor in his own country," John 4, 44; "In My Father's house are many mansions," John 14, 2; "A chosen vessel," Acts 9, 15; "In Him we live and move and have our being," Acts 17, 28; "Let us do evil that good may come," Rom. 3, 8; "There is no fear of God before their eyes," Rom. 3, 18; "The Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father," Rom. 8, 15; "When I was a child, I spake as a child," 1 Cor. 13, 11; "The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," Eph. 3, 19; "The unsearchable riches of Christ," Eph. 3, 8; "Turned to flight the armies of the aliens," Heb. 11, 34; "The tongue can no man tame," Jas. 3, 8; "Out of darkness into His marvelous light," 1 Pet. 2, 9; "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth," 1 Pet. 2, 22; "The Shepherd and Bishop of your souls," 1 Pet. 2, 25.

Of course, any one would recognize "the prodigal son" and the "Promised Land," and even "can the leopard change his spots?" as coming from Scripture. But these, too, are of Biblical origin: Fear and trembling, a broken reed, filthy lucre, vials of wrath, safe and sound, daily bread, all things to all men, a drop in the bucket, a fly in the ointment, a howling wilderness, a soft answer, the apple of the eye, the burden and the heat of the day, the eleventh hour, in the land of the living, on the wings of the wind, a wheel within a wheel, no man can serve two masters, to heap coals of fire on, and to spare the rod.

Speaking of the Authorized Version, Prof. A. S. Peake, in his volume on the Bible, says: —

"It was written so that common people might read it gladly, in language that was at once simple and homely, racy and picturesque. Yet it does not carry this racy, homely quality to an excess; it does not sink below the level of its subject-matter. There is in it a noble splendor and dignity, a purity and felicity, a sense of satisfying rhythm and melodious harmony, and easy grace, a diction nervous and flexible, which have made it not only an English classic of the first rank, but the joy, the inspiration and comfort of multitudes upon multitudes in age after age these three hundred years. Scripture is indeed so quick and powerful, stored with such radiant energy, that through the most imperfect medium its light and heat will be conveyed. But it is a great mistake to imagine that the facts and the ideas are all that matter, while the expression may safely be neglected. The inspiration of the original does not reside simply in the subject-matter, it touches the form in which it was given. And similarly no translation can do justice to the Bible unless the expression is on a level with the thought. The beauty and the power would be largely lost if clothed in a mean and ill-fitting dress. It has been of the greatest value to us that through so many generations the religion of the English people has been nurtured on a translation of Scripture which is throughout of the highest literary quality."

Edmund Gosse, librarian to the British House of Lords, said: "When young men ask me for advice in the forma-



tion of a prose style, I have no counsel for them except this: 'Read aloud a portion of the Old and another of the New Testament as often as you possibly can.'"

Cardinal Newman wrote: "Its [the Bible's] style has deservedly become the very model of good English, the standard of the language of all future time." Froude, in his *History of England*, remarks: "The peculiar genius — if such a word may be permitted — which breathes through it, the mingled majesty and tenderness, the preternatural grandeur, the Saxon simplicity, unequaled, unapproached in the attempted improvements of modern scholars, all are here and bear the impress of the mind of one man — William Tyndale."

It can still be said that of the sacred writings with which we are familiar three-fourths reach us in Tyndale's incomparable harmonious idiom. He contributed to our Scriptures, so writes Professor Goodspeed of Chicago, "not only more than any other man, but more than all the others combined," and he "shaped the religious vocabulary of the English-speaking world."

The famous critic of English literature George Saintsbury, professor in the University of Edinburgh, says of the Authorized Version: —

"It is the greatest monument by far of Jacobean prose, . . . and the objection which Selden made and which has been rather unwisely echoed since, — that it does not directly represent the speech of its own or any time, — is entirely fallacious. No good prose style ever does represent, except in such forms as letter-writing and the dialog in plays and novels, the spoken language of its time, but only a certain general literary form, colored and shaped not too much by contemporary practise. The extraordinary merits of the Authorized Version are probably due to the fact that its authors, with almost more than merely human good sense of purpose and felicity of result, allowed the literary excellences of the texts from which they worked — Hebrew, Greek, and Latin — and those of the earlier versions into English from

that called Wyclif's to the Bishops' Bible, to filter through their own sieve and acquire a moderate, but only a moderate, tincture of the filter itself in passing. No doubt the constant repetition, universal till recently and pretty general fortunately still, of the text in the ears of each generation has had much to do with its prerogative authority and still more with the fact that it still hardly seems archaic. But the unanimous opinion of the best critics from generation to generation and still more the utter shipwreck of the elaborately foolish attempt to revise it some years ago are evidences of intrinsic goodness, which will certainly be confirmed by every one who, with large knowledge of English at different periods, examines it impartially now. There is no better English anywhere than the English of the Bible, and one of its great merits as English is its retention of the 'blend' character of all the truest English products." (*Hist. of Engl. Lit.*, p. 380 f.)

A Roman Catholic of the eighteenth century said: "If accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version, this is of all versions the most excellent." And the Roman Catholic Father Faber wrote: —

"Who will say that the uncommon beauty and marvelous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives on the ear like a music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church-bells, which the convert scarcely knows how he can forego. Its felicities seem often to be almost things rather than words. It is part of the national mind and the anchor of the national seriousness. Nay, it is worshiped with a positive idolatry, in extenuation of whose fanaticism its intrinsic beauty pleads availingly with the scholar. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. It is the representative of a man's best moments; all that there has been about him of soft, and gentle, and pure, and penitent, and good speaks to him forever out of his English Bible. It is his sacred thing, which doubt never dimmed and controversy never soiled; and in the length and breadth of the land there is not a Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible."

As Luther's German Bible version was the book which

did so much to create the German language and direct it into the grooves in which it has moved since, so the Authorized Version has influenced the English language and English literature. Wherever the English language was spoken, there the language of the Authorized Version has had its influence. No matter how the authors and their themes may differ, upon examination of the works of Milton and also Carlyle, Scott, Ruskin, Browning, or Tennyson, it will be revealed that words and images have been taken from the Authorized Version and have been woven into the fabric of English literature.

We close our study with an editorial which appeared in the *London Times*, June 30, 1925, on the quadricentennial of William Tyndale's English version of the New Testament. This noble tribute reads as follows: —

"No book that ever was printed has had an influence so profound, so universal, and so enduring over all the races of British blood as the English Bible. Their conceptions of the sublimest and most sacred truths, their morals, their politics, their public and their private habits of thought, their manners which are the reflection of these things, their literature which presents and embodies them, their daily conversation in unnumbered homely acts and words, have been framed upon it and colored by it, consciously and unconsciously, throughout the secular process of their growth and their development. It is impossible to imagine what they would have been, what their growth and their development would have been, without this influence, constant as the air they breathe and not less needful to their full national life.

"By Tyndale's time Saxon and French and even the English of Wyclif were no longer 'understood of the people.' English had become a new language, full of a fresh sap and vigor, but still supple with the suppleness of youth and untrammelled by over-rigid rule. Tyndale's genius taught him to reveal its powers in clothing the splendors of the Bible in English speech worthy of their greatness, while the art of printing for the first time made it possible to place an English version in the hands of all. Tyndale had shown the way; he had revealed the wealth, the force, the

subtle delicacy, the majesty, and the incomparable rhythm of the finest English prose. He had shown, once for all, that it could meetly convey the sublimest speculation, the noblest poetry, the most impassioned song, the clearest and the most dramatic narrative in hands that knew how to handle it. He was a pioneer, but a pioneer who reached at once the loftiest heights of his art. Coverdale and the authors of the Authorized Version had but to follow in his footsteps; and they had the wisdom and the taste to tread closely in them. He had the power, as had Luther, of adapting to the highest literary uses the every-day speech of the people. That is the secret of the abiding appeal of his work. That is what made the appeal immediate and wide-spread in his day; that is what has preserved it to our own and what must keep it fresh and searching while the English tongue is spoken among men. He did what Erasmus, an incomparably greater scholar, desired to do. He made the Bible familiar to the hind on the land, to the weaver at the loom, and to the traveler on the road. Many of the very finest and most musical sentences in the Authorized Version are taken straight from his translation. Others which may have gained in accuracy have lost their force and native vigor by the change. There are translations into other European languages older than Tyndale's. They are known to antiquaries and to scholars; not one has lived among the people. But the English Bible is the mind of the English people of all sorts and conditions that they are, and of all the English-speaking peoples that have gone out from them. It permeates them all, and it binds them all together by countless ties above measure or analysis. It binds them whatever their estate, whatever their calling, whatever their age, whatever their Church or their communion. Our whole speech is soaked in it. We think it and speak it hourly without remembering whence the apt and homely phrases or the eloquence loftier far than that of our common thoughts is derived. It is the daily food of the wise and of the simple, of the sage and of the little child. To have endowed hundreds of millions with such a book through centuries past and centuries to come is a very wonderful achievement, and to William Tyndale more than to any other man the chief glory of this achievement belongs."

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## THE MENDACITY OF MODERNISM.

In 1925 Bishop Brown of the Protestant Episcopal Church was expelled from the clergy of that denomination. Brown had openly denied the Holy Trinity, the Bible as God's revelation, and the existence of a God; and the evidence of his being utterly out of harmony with the teachings of his Church was so clear and convincing as to make it impossible for him to be retained as an official, or even a minister, in that communion. The Episcopal Church is quite liberal in giving latitude in matters of belief. Both on this side of the Atlantic and in England a number of its most prominent bishops and publicists no longer consider the Scriptures the final authority in matters of doctrine. Regarding the expulsion of Bishop Brown even some secular papers reported the outcome of the trial with approval. One editorial argued that La Follette and others who set themselves against the principles and policies of the Republican Party should be ruled out of the party. That was not punishment in its view; it was not persecution. It was simple justice. Having proved disloyal to the party to which they professedly belonged, why should they not be ruled out of the party? Who could possibly object to being disowned when he no longer can call the principles of his party his own? Such a one should do the manly part and step out without waiting to be forced out. Surely in religious matters it is far more important that a Church should be a unit in its faith on the great fundamentals of the Christian faith than that a political party should be a unit. The differences between the two leading political parties are certainly not so vital as the differences between Bishop Brown and other radical Liberals and the great historic Church to which they professedly belong, but with whose faith they are no longer in sympathy.

But then, what of the Liberals and Modernists in the Episcopal Church? What of the Liberals in the Presbyterian Church? There is a huge gap between what they believe and teach and what the *Book of Common Prayer* or what the *Westminster Catechism* teaches. Do these creeds mean anything, or do they not? Clergymen in both communions are ordained with an obligation to profess whole-heartedly, and to teach throughout their ministry, the doctrines contained in these creeds.

Now, there appear to be two methods of handling this difficult situation, each, as we hope to demonstrate, as hypocritical as the other. The two methods may be briefly outlined: —

1. Accept the creed in a "mystical" sense.
2. Have your mental reservations while reciting it.

First, then, the "spiritual," or "mystical," interpretation. The proposition is defended that in the creeds there is a literal and there is also a spiritual meaning. The literal signification is of course the meaning of the words in their accepted sense. For instance, when we say "Maker of heaven and earth," we confess the doctrine of Creation. When we say "Born of the Virgin Mary," we mean that Jesus was supernaturally conceived. When we say, "He shall come to judge the quick and the dead," we intend to convey our belief in the Second Advent. Of this literal significance Modernists are willing to concede (as did a writer in the *Episcopal Churchman* some years ago) that it "for many minds still has a valuable function to discharge as an external envelope safeguarding the inner worth, the ultimate spiritual reality." But he continues by quoting with approval the words of an Anglican, Mr. R. Holt Hutton: "Dogma is only subsidiary to that unveiling of God to man which is the single aim of revelation, and instead of being made subsidiary, it is sometimes made to

stand in the place of that to which it ought to be purely instrumental."

Of course, the Anglican rector is not so crude in his methods as to tell his people that he believes NOT the historical, BUT the "spiritual" meaning of the Third Article. Note what the *Churchman* says of the "modern" believer: "He does not deny this or that article of the Creed taken literally; he simply passes beyond the husk to the kernel, beyond the body to the spirit, to the great redeeming message and life's meaning as based on this message, which lies at the heart of the creeds."

When it is remembered that Modernism denies outright the teachings of Christianity, that it says no where the historic creeds say yes, the sentence last quoted must stand as an almost unsurpassed sample of religious hypocrisy. This becomes still more evident when we note individual examples of the "spiritual," or "mystical," interpretation of the older symbols. One of the spokesmen, quoted in the *Presbyterian* in 1925, said that, when a man declared he could not accept the words "conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," he advised him to continue repeating the Creed "with the meaning that Christ and His mission was conceived in the mind of God"!

Thus progressively the Church is weaned away from the ancient body of faith, as Dr. Gilmore said: "We win by compromise. . . . Among Episcopalians the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is being dissolved, but that of the Incarnation survives. Later on it will be seen that the doctrine of the Incarnation must be surrendered — indeed, that its surrender was inevitable from the outset and is delayed only by ecclesiastical reluctance to do more than compromise!"

Or how about the divergent views concerning the nature of the hereafter? The Creed unequivocally says that there

will be first a resurrection of the dead and then an eternity, spent by some in heaven, by others in hell. The Modernist does not hesitate to allow any kind of interpretation for this momentous section of the Apostles' Creed. One of their number was asked, "Is a belief in reincarnation compatible with the Creed?" His answer is worthy of literal transcription: "The doctrine of reincarnation is of Indian origin and is quite foreign to the development of the belief in immortality in the Jewish and Christian religions. Speaking for myself, the theory seems repellent and has few sound reasons in its favor. Still, some devout members of all our churches think that only by such a belief can they maintain a rational theory of the future life. They can recite from the heart: 'I believe in the life everlasting.'"

This almost incredible insult not only to the belief, but to the intelligence of Christianity is found in the questions column conducted by Dr. Samuel McComb in the *Churchman*, October 28, 1922.

Turning to the Presbyterian Church, there is Dr. Bowie of Grace Church, New York, who defends the mental-reservation theory in reciting the Creed thus: "A man can say the Apostles' or the Nicene Creed and rejoice to say it, even though he may frankly be uncertain whether the Virgin Birth was demonstrable fact or only a reverent and lovely tradition of the early Church." Being interpreted, this means: Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost. Yes. He was born of the Virgin Mary. Yes. But a man who so confesses need not believe that in literal terms some unprecedented miracle was wrought. In other words, you can state that an event essentially physical, the conception of Christ, so happened and can yet hold that the physical event only happened in a spiritual sense!

It hardly seems possible that the modernistic clergyman can long continue to play fast and loose with plain honesty



indefinitely. It seems that he will be compelled in the long run to accept the standard required of a witness at court and a merchant in the market-place, namely, that a man's word is his bond, by which bond, as Christ said, he is justified or condemned.

The same scandal has, of course, agitated faithful Christians in Germany ever since rationalism has gained the upper hand in the ministerial courses at the universities. The graduates were thoroughly inoculated with skepticism and unbelief. Yet in order to hold a pastoral office, the law required ordination, and ordination involved subscription to the ancient creeds of the Church. In explaining their mental processes while taking the ministerial vow or while reciting the Creed in public services, German Modernists have adopted much the same expedients as the Episcopalian or Presbyterian preacher of the modernistic type. If the Second Article says "raised again from the dead, ascended into heaven," nothing more need be intended but that Jesus entered into another form of reality, in which He is continuing His work as Lord of the Church, — and resurrection of Christ's body is not necessarily to be understood!

A liberal professor (Baumgartner of Kiel) complained that his own wife, who clung to the Lutheran faith, was dissatisfied with a sermon he had delivered on Good Friday. That God had laid upon His Son the sins of the entire world and that Jesus had made the sacrifice for the atonement of all mankind, — this his wife did not find in his sermon. Baumgartner rightly concludes: "Neither did my congregation! And so the question arises, What am I to preach about on the festival days? I will manage on ordinary Sundays," — that is to say, he will be able to use pious phrases which the hearers will understand in their traditional sense, — "but how about the festivals of the

Church with their emphasis on fundamental doctrines?" The only solution is to choose one's words so carefully as to hide one's modernistic belief from the ordinary man (who might rebel and demand the preacher's resignation) and yet satisfy his "scientific" conscience. It is plain that a minister of this type turns hypocrite whenever he recites the opening words of the service: "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost!" He believes in no Trinity.

The Methodist Church has its doctrine fixed in the 25 "Articles of Religion," a part of Methodism's constitution. And the constitution forbids any change or modification of these articles. As late as 1920 the Discipline contained this question asked of all candidates for "full membership" in the Methodist Church, to be answered in the affirmative: "Do you believe the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church?" For some reason or other neither that question nor anything of like import is found in the ritual of 1924. But there remains this question asked the deacon during ordination: "Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments?" When the candidate before his conference and before his God answers, "I do believe them," he is certainly supposed to tell the truth. From the lips of the Modernists that answer is a barefaced lie. And what is meant by that question asked the candidate for Elder's Orders: "Will you be ready with all faithful diligence to withstand all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word?" Is that man expected to tell the truth when he answers, "I will do so, by the help of the Lord"? After taking that solemn vow, is he expected to fulfil that vow? If not, then is the whole thing a solemn joke, a pious travesty? In the *Defender*, published at Wichita, Kans., a Methodist

minister wrote concerning this vow: "It is a well-known fact that many are not 'withstanding those erroneous and strange doctrines,' but are actually preaching them in many of our great pulpits, and not only so, but they, with the holy vows upon them, are vigorously ridiculing those of us who are doing our best to keep the vows we have taken."

The hypocrisy of Modernism cannot deny itself whenever it defends the apostasy which its attitude involves. Typical of the defense of this substitution of unbelief for Christian doctrine is the declaration of Rev. Archie B. Bedford, pastor of a Christian church at Syracuse. He said in 1925: —

"Religion can be to us a completed system, and our young people who study in any of our schools to-day of any standing will give up that religion if that religion has to be the conception of our fathers in every detail; or religion can be to us a far nobler thing, a river whose fountains are in the life of Christ. The religion of our parents was an individualistic religion, working for the salvation of the soul from hell. Our religion still works for the salvation of souls; but it believes Jesus meant what He prayed — 'Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven,' so along with the individualistic gospel, we are preaching the social gospel. We must be true to the past, but we also must be ready to change and push forward under the cross of Christ; and if we have faith in Christ, we will have no fear for Christianity; for if all the generations down to our day, including ourselves, could not destroy it, we need have no fear for the future."

Of such deceptive language it may truly be said that it would mislead, if it were possible, even the elect. What other word than "mendacity," defined by the dictionaries as the quality of being "addicted to falsifying," "full of deceit," properly characterizes this aspect of Modernism?

One of the pet phrases of the Modernist is that "Christianity is a life, not a creed." In a more popular form the demand is worded thus: "We want deeds, not creeds."

Now, if there is a fact that can be established with the

greatest ease and illustrated by innumerable instances, it is this, that life and its deeds are inseparably connected up with one's personal creed, conviction, belief. During the Civil War the Southern States defended a creed. All the achievements of Lincoln were an outflow of his creed. Every politician has his style of beliefs, convictions, out of which will flow his conduct as a public officer.

To say "Let us have deeds, not creeds" is about as sensible as saying: —

What we need is crops, not agriculture!

What we want is flowers, not botany!

What we demand of our soldiers is victory, not courage and patriotism!

As for the statement that "religion is a life, not a creed," — that is about as true to facts as if one said that an ax is an implement for chopping wood and not a piece of sharpened steel. An ax is a piece of sharpened steel, and it is this fact that makes it an implement for chopping wood. Likewise it is because Christianity *is* a creed, incorporating in its statements certain great historic and redemptive facts, that it is possible for it to produce a life. "The life which I now live in the flesh," said St. Paul, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Back of that great life, as of every other true Christian life, stand the eternal verities of the Christian creed.

Christianity is a historic religion. It is rooted in events which occurred nearly two thousand years ago. Jesus Christ Himself, in all that He was and did as the Revelation of the eternal Father and as the Redeemer of men, is the essence of Christianity. Christianity is thus founded on certain historical facts, facts which are permanently valid, facts which will remain unchanged to the last moment of time, and it is these facts which give it its specific

form and make it be distinct and different from any other religion in the world. Moreover, I believe that those facts constitute the sum and substance of the great historic creeds of the Church. What has Modernism to say about this? Incredible as it may seem, it denies that in religion, facts are of the first importance. When, in 1923, the Episcopalian House of Bishops issued a pastoral letter strongly conservative in its theology, the modernistic wing of the clergy was "disturbed" because the letter "gave the impression that acceptance of facts by the mind is more important than a way of life." (*Churchman*, December 29, 1923.) Note again the squinting logic, as if our way of life were not governed by the facts of the Gospel which we apprehend in faith!

Much the same sophistry is contained in such expressions as the following by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, adopted in 1930: "The religion which Jesus came to bring is not a thing to be argued about; it is a life to be experienced," — a sentiment expanded by the *Churchman*, October 20, 1923, in the following editorial: —

"The word 'doctrine' in common parlance to-day usually calls up images of controversy, fighting, bickering. The Christian churches throughout the centuries have made doctrine a thing to fight over. Of this they should be ashamed. Christian doctrines can never appeal to the world until they are made things of beauty, until they are translated into action in Christian lives. Surely that is what St. Paul meant when he wrote Titus to 'adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior, in all things.' A Beethoven symphony is only black notes on white paper, mere directions, until it is played and thus becomes a thing of beauty. Our Lord's principles do not transform the world by being set down in the Gospel-stories; the transformation begins when they are embodied and set forth in concrete form in men's lives. The most effective defenders of the faith are not philosophers, theologians, or others who quibble over theological subtleties, but such

folk as we all ought to be, people sincerely adorning in their lives Christian doctrine."

The vicious implication of such a presentation is that theologians who have endeavored to follow the prophets and apostles into the depths of divine revelation have not "adorned in their lives Christian doctrine." As a matter of fact there have been no more unselfish, saintly men than the leaders in Protestant theology during the age of the great dogmaticians. And what about controversy? Far from being ashamed — as the unbelieving editor admonishes us to be — "of having made doctrine a thing to fight over," we know that in so doing we follow not only the example, but the direct command of St. Paul, St. John, and St. Peter.

The sophistry of which we are here complaining uses the specious contrast of "not — but" in order to work its deception. Here is an example, which unfortunately we find in a Lutheran official paper: —

"The mistake is when men conceive of orthodoxy of thought as an acceptance of a system of dogmas formulated by the Church and make this acceptance equal to, or the same as, a saving faith. Even Paul recognized that it was possible to build on the foundation, which is Christ, with material that could not stand the final fiery or acid test of truth and still be saved. God is dealing with men who are free agents and who are given the right and the power to think on these things and to form their own judgments. He does not want us to accept everything ready-made for us. He rather wants us to think the Biblical truths through, to assimilate them, and thereby become established in our faith and convinced in our mind of the truths that have become dear to us. It is possible that one man may feel constrained to reject what another man accepts. Hence we have different Christian denominations and different theological schools in the same denominations. And this is not something which we should deplore. There should be room in the Church for different schools of Christian thought in order that truth may be revealed and glorified."

Note the trickiness of this false opposition: "God does

NOT want us to accept everything ready-made for us. He RATHER wants us to think the Biblical truth through," etc. As a matter of fact both statements are true. We should indeed establish our faith by thoroughly convincing our minds of the truths of theology. But this by no means excludes that other truth, that God "wants us to accept everything" exactly as revealed by Him through the inspired writers.

In all this bad logic there is an attempt to escape from the necessity of defending Scriptural truths. To a Modernist there can indeed be no more futile task, since he considers all religious truth merely a product of evolution. But it does seem that he should at times become aware of the absurdities into which he is forced by his antitheological position. Possibly the high-water mark was reached by Dr. W. M. Guthrie of New York City when he said: "Controversy rather blinds us than enlightens us. No man was ever convinced by argument. What men need are facts and spiritual experience, scholarship and culture, not an exercise in logomachy and dialectics. That does not help the cause of Christianity. To identify the Christian faith with what are called creeds and confessions is a mistake. Faith is essentially a spiritual attribute."

Every sentence in this statement is either in flat contradiction with itself or with the facts of experience. If controversy rather blinds than enlightens, then all the discussion of philosophical and scientific questions during four thousand years of recorded history was vain babbling. Dr. Guthrie knew what all the rest of us know, that nothing *but* controversy brings out the truth, that nothing *but* argument has ever convinced a man. He knows well enough that spiritual experience and scholarship are not at dagger's ends with dialectic argumentation; that faith as a spiritual attribute has never been *identified* with creeds;

and that alongside of this statement that other should be placed: that faith has ever *sought expression* in creed and confessions.

The Evangelical Synod (*Unierte Kirche*) has been fighting the Lutheran Church since its first organization. Its leaders have found fault especially with the Missouri Synod for its strict antiunionistic stand and have ransacked the dictionaries, both German and English, for hard words to apply to us. We shall not repeat them here because they do not make pleasant reading. But now the question: Where has the Evangelical Synod landed through its boasted "freedom in non-essentials"? Where will an ocean liner land when it discards its rudder at the dock? The final moorings of the Evangelical Synod are not yet in sight,\* but we are able to mark some of the later stages of its rudderless journey. The *Theological Magazine* of that church-body in 1927 contained an article entitled "The Dilemma of the Eden Graduate." Eden Seminary is the theological school of the Evangelical Synod; and a "dilemma" is any situation in which one has the choice of two evils. Now, the dilemma described in this article is due to the fact that the Evangelical Synod still has a catechism containing such doctrines as original sin, the atonement through Christ's blood, the resurrection of the dead, etc., while at the theological seminary the students are taught that quite a few of these doctrines are old rubbish. The seminary, says this writer, has heeded the call for "up-to-dateness" and so has discarded, for instance, the belief in angels as "fantastic speculative dogma." But the catechism still teaches the existence of angels! Again: "You flunk in Eden in case you answer in an examination that man lost the image of God as a consequence of the fall of

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\* Written in 1930. The Evangelical Synod has now (1934) merged with the Reformed Church.



the first man, while, if you teach the answer that is there considered correct, after you have entered the ministry, you will be denounced as a heretic," since the catechism still teaches original sin. Worst of all, *the catechism teaches the substitutionary atonement through the blood of Christ, while the seminary professor teaches that in Christ's work "we have not by a judgment of God a transference to us of a performance of His as that of another person,"* — a plain denial of the sacrificial death of our Lord. The writer of the article complains that this "practise of teaching one theology in our seminary and expecting our graduates to preach another" causes hopeless confusion; in fact, "Eulenspiegel could certainly not have thought of a more ridiculous situation." But this situation is simply the result of consistently living up to the unionistic principle.

Rev. J. Oliver Buswell, president of Wheaton College, said (March, 1935): —

"I recently had a conversation with a Ritschlian theologian in the presence of several conservatives of the easy-going type. The virgin birth of Christ was mentioned. The Ritschlian stated, 'I believe in the virgin birth of Christ.' I happened to know that he has, in other company, denied the virgin birth of Christ. I asked him, 'Do you believe that Christ was actually born of a virgin as a matter of historical fact, or do you believe in the Virgin Birth merely as a value judgment?' He replied, 'The Virgin Birth has *the value of the incarnation*, but the mode of it is inconceivable.' (What did he mean?)

"Some years ago, in an extremely liberal divinity school, I heard the professor of systematic theology say that young ministers who were asked to repeat the Apostles' Creed should do so without hesitation because it had value for their people, though *they were not expected to believe it*. I was reminded of the story of the slightly more honest Oxford professor, who in repeating the Apostles' Creed added the words 'used to' under his breath before the word 'believe.'

"In this same divinity school I attended a lecture in which the resurrection of Lazarus was compared with the resuscitation of the hero in one of the mystery religions. Both were said to be

beautiful stories. A young minister in the class asked the following question, 'A man in my church has asked me, "Do you believe that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead or not?" Now, what shall I tell him?' To this the lecturing professor replied: 'Ask the man, "What do you think about it?" and then agree with him and change the subject.' I happened to meet the dean of that divinity school some time afterward. I reported the instance to him and said, 'That is neither religion nor scholarship. It is dishonesty.' He replied: 'You do not understand; that is just the way to get along with people.'

When you hear the modernistic preacher say, "Christ, the true Son of God, our divine Savior," you naturally suppose that he holds our Lutheran doctrine regarding the divinity of Christ and the redemption through His blood. Well, maybe he does, and maybe he doesn't. He may be a man of the Rev. Andrew Gillies kind, pastor of a Minneapolis church, who said in a sermon delivered some years ago: "The Bible is inspired! The Bible is infallible!" "Grand!" you say, "just the way we teach!" But the Rev. Gillies did not mean what our pastors would mean if they uttered the same sentences. What he said was this: "The Bible is inspired because it inspires you and me. The Bible is infallible, not in literary form or scientific statement, but in spiritual power." What the Rev. Gillies gives with one hand he takes away with the other. "The Bible is inspired; that is to say, it is not inspired."

What a grand game of sleight of hand was it not that a New York preacher performed when, after specifically denying that Jesus was "God in human form," he said: "But some will say: 'Ah, then you deny the divinity of Christ?' No, most unmistakably, we do not. We affirm He was divine, and" — now note the modification — "we affirm the divinity of every created soul!" All is clear. "Christ was divine," sure; so was Plato, Shakespeare, Lincoln; so is Tom, Dick, Harry, Mary, May, Susan, — "every created soul." But the average young man in the

audience would not observe how completely the first statement is negated by the second. Unless he saw the sermon before him in cold print, with every heretical statement standing out like a sore thumb, he would maintain: "That man teaches the divinity of Christ 'just as we do.'"

One Sunday in February of 1930 Rev. A. J. Folsom of Plymouth Congregational Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., said in a sermon which was intended to set forth the specific doctrines of the Congregationalist denomination: "Christ is our Redeemer and Savior." What more can we ask? Why would a man that makes this clear and definite statement not be recognized as a brother in Christ? Because he went on to say: "Christ is our Redeemer and Savior, not as a substitution, such as medieval, man-made dogma of former centuries taught, but as an inspiring, quickening spiritual power rising up within the heart unto life eternal." Splendid sound, yet cyanide to the soul. Rev. Folsom explicitly denies the central doctrine of the Bible, the atonement of Christ: "not as a substitution." But how many lay hearers would at once recognize the pagan character of this man's preaching? Has he not said, "Christ is our Redeemer and Savior"? Yes, and Christ has said: "Beware of false prophets! Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Modernists cannot preach a sermon on Is. 53 without stultifying themselves in the very announcement of the text. We have reference to those preachers who have been taught at Union Theological Seminary or Chicago Divinity School that the second half of Isaiah's book is not written by Isaiah. Such a one would not begin his sermon thus: "The words of Holy Writ which we have chosen for consideration to-night are found recorded in the 53d chapter of what is commonly called the Book of Isaiah, but is really, in great part, so my beloved teacher, the great Professor

Dr. von Stirnbrett, maintains, the work of a forger, who lived four hundred years after Isaiah was dead and buried, where the words read as follows: —" No, he would say: "— in the 53d chapter of Isaiah the prophet, where the words read as follows," just as though he believed, as you and I do, that Isaiah wrote the chapter!

There is, to our mind, a cowardly intellectual dishonesty involved by saying "the divine Christ" when all the infidel preacher means is "the divinely endowed"; by saying "the inspired Bible," when "the book that inspires us with noble thoughts" is all that is meant; by saying "sanctification" for "good intentions," "salvation of the world" for "social improvement"; by saying, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus," while what the agnostics in the pulpit actually mean is: "May the good conscience of knowing that you try your best to live a Christian life keep you in a steady course of moral improvement"; by saying one thing and meaning another and thereby leading the unlearned astray.

In view of all this we are now able to place immediately a correct estimate upon the value in the court of common sense of such statements as this in the *Evangelical Herald* (organ of the Evangelical Synod) of January 17, 1924: "Christianity is not at all a matter of belief; it is a matter of faith and life, of righteousness and service, and any exaggerated emphasis on belief as embodied in creeds or doctrinal statements can only obscure the true character of Jesus Christ and His Gospel."

As we cannot believe for one moment that the writers of such sentiments as these are entirely bereft of the logical faculty, and as beyond question they know that historic Christianity is a matter of belief, we cannot accept as genuine their plea to save true religion by declaring all its

doctrines indifferent and to preserve the true character of Jesus Christ from obscurity by treating the rejection of His teachings as of no consequence to the individual or to the Church; and we rightfully charge Modernism with conscious deception and with hypocrisy.

Let us not despise theological learning or one-sidedly condemn all theological controversy and the use of argument in order to save those involved in skeptical doubts or attacked by wily heretics. The study of theology must remain the profession of the Christian minister. In order that one may learn to swim, one must get into the water. And you will never learn in shallow water. On the other hand, we would not entrust our boys to a swimming-teacher who kicks his pupils off the high bank of a fast stream and then watches them either struggle to shore or perish in the waters. Least of all would we expect one to advertise himself as a swimming-instructor who himself is threshing about in waters too fast and deep for him and is even now convulsed in the throes of spiritual death.

A comparison of the Reformed preaching and literature of a hundred or even fifty years ago shows an alarming decay of conviction regarding the fundamentals of Christianity. The famous heresy cases, like the Briggs case of half a century ago, would be impossible to-day. The Episcopal Church will unfrock a man when he preaches atheism outright; everything else goes. With subtlety as illustrated in these paragraphs, but also by bold denial, attacks are made from within on the essentials of Christianity, so that we need a new definition of proselytizing. We respect the ministry of the Reformed churches so long as it is a Christian ministry. To invite the adherents of such denominations into our communion would be sheep-stealing. But this applies only when it involves the sheep of another shepherd. It does not apply when the sheep are shepherded by a wolf.

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